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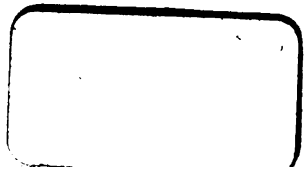

THE

WORKS

OF

MR. A. COWLEY;

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

C. Whittingham, Goswell-Street.

THE

WORKS IN PROSE AND VERS

OF MR. A. COWLEY;

WITH NOTES

BY DR. HURD,

LATE BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

Painted by Zinck in Enamel, in the Collection at Strawberry Hill:
Engraved by J. Romney.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

"Forgot his Epic, nay Pindaric art;
"*But still* we love the language of his heart."
POPE.

LONDON:

THE

WORKS

OF

MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY;

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

A NEW EDITION.

POINTING OUT THE PIECES

SELECTED BY

RICHARD HURD, D. D.

LATE BISHOP OF WORCESTER;

AND

INCLUDING HIS LORDSHIP'S NOTES,

AND

DR. JOHNSON'S

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN SHARPE, OPPOSITE ALBANY, PICCADILLY.

1809.

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LIFE

OF

COWLEY.

THE Life of COWLEY, notwithstanding the penury of English biography, has been written by Dr. Sprat, an author whose pregnancy of imagination and elegance of language have deservedly set him high in the ranks of literature; but his zeal of friendship, or ambition of eloquence, has produced a funeral oration rather than a history: he has given the character, not the life, of Cowley; for he writes with so little detail, that scarcely any thing is distinctly known, but all is shewn confused and enlarged through the mist of panegyrick.

ABRAHAM COWLEY was born in the year one thousand six hundred and eighteen. His father was a grocer, whose condition Dr. Sprat conceals under the general appellation of a citizen; and, what would probably not have been less carefully

suppressed, the omission of his name in the register of St. Dunstan's parish gives reason to suspect that his father was a sectary. Whoever he was, he died before the birth of his son, and consequently left him to the care of his mother; whom Wood represents as struggling earnestly to procure him a literary education, and who, as she lived to the age of eighty, had her solicitude rewarded by seeing her son eminent, and, I hope, by seeing him fortunate, and partaking his prosperity. We know at least, from Sprat's account, that he always acknowledged her care, and justly paid the dues of filial gratitude.

In the window of his mother's apartment lay Spenser's Fairy Queen; in which he very early took delight to read, till, by feeling the charms of verse, he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such are the accidents, which, sometimes remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that particular designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called Genius. The true Genius is a mind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particu-

lar direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great Painter of the present age, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's treatise.

By his mother's solicitation he was admitted into Westminster-school, where he was soon distinguished. He was wont, says Sprat, to relate, "That he had this defect in his memory at that "time, that his teachers never could bring it to "retain the ordinary rules of grammar."

This is an instance of the natural desire of man to propagate a wonder. It is surely very difficult to tell any thing as it was heard, when Sprat could not refrain from amplifying a commodious incident, though the book, to which he prefixed his narrative, contained its confutation. A memory admitting some things, and rejecting others, an intellectual digestion that concocted the pulp of learning, but refused the husks, had the appearance of an instinctive elegance, of a particular provision made by Nature for literary politeness. But, in the author's own honest relation, the marvel vanishes: he was, he says, such "an

" enemy to all constraint, that his master never " could prevail on him to learn the rules without " book." He does not tell that he could not learn the rules, but that, being able to perform his exercises without them, and being an " enemy " to constraint," he spared himself the labour.

Among the English poets, Cowley, Milton, and Pope, might be said " to lisp in numbers;" and have given such early proofs, not only of powers of language, but of comprehension of things, as to more tardy minds seems scarcely credible. But of the learned puerilities of Cowley there is no doubt, since a volume of his poems was not only written but printed in his thirteenth year*; containing, with other poetical compositions, " The tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," written when he was ten years old; and " Constantia and Philetus," written two years after.

While he was yet at school he produced a comedy called " Love's Riddle," though it was

* This is a mistake, as Cowley was at that time (1633) fifteen years of age.

not published till he had been some time at Cambridge. This comedy is of the pastoral kind, which requires no acquaintance with the living world, and therefore the time at which it was composed adds little to the wonders of Cowley's minority.

In 1636 he was removed to Cambridge, where he continued his studies with great intenseness; for he is said to have written, while he was yet a young student, the greater part of his "Davideis;" a work of which the materials could not have been collected without the study of many years, but by a mind of the greatest vigour and activity.

Two years after his settlement at Cambridge he published "Love's Riddle," with a poetical dedication to sir Kenelm Digby; of whose acquaintance all his contemporaries seem to have been ambitious; and "Naufragium Joculare," a comedy written in Latin, but without due attention to the ancient models; for it is not loose verse, but mere prose. It was printed with a dedication in verse to Dr. Comber, master of the college; but having neither the facility of a popular nor the accuracy

of a learned work, it seems to be now universally neglected.

At the beginning of the civil war, as the prince passed through Cambridge in his way to York, he was entertained with a representation of "The Guardian," a comedy, which Cowley says was neither written nor acted, but rough-drawn by him, and repeated by the scholars. That this comedy was printed during his absence from his country, he appears to have considered as injurious to his reputation; though, during the suppression of the theatres, it was sometimes privately acted with sufficient approbation.

In 1643, being now master of arts, he was, by the prevalence of the parliament, ejected from Cambridge, and sheltered himself at St. John's college in Oxford; where, as is said by Wood, he published a satire, called "The Puritan and Papist," which was only inserted in the last collection of his works; and so distinguished himself by the warmth of his loyalty, and the elegance of his conversation, that he gained the kindness and confidence of those who attended

the king, and amongst others of lord Falkland, whose notice cast a lustre on all to whom it was extended.

About the time when Oxford was surrendered to the parliament, he followed the queen to Paris, where he became secretary to the lord Jermyn, afterwards earl of St. Albans, and was employed in such correspondence as the royal cause required, and particularly in cyphering and decyphering the letters that passed between the king and queen; an employment of the highest confidence and honour. So wide was his province of intelligence, that, for several years, it filled all his days and two or three nights in the week.

In the year 1647 his "Mistress" was published; for he imagined, as he declared in his preface to a subsequent edition, that "poets are "scarce thought freemen of their company "without paying some duties, or obliging themselves to be true to Love."

This obligation to amorous ditties owes, I believe, its original to the fame of Petrarch, who,

in an age rude and uncultivated, by his tuneful homage to his Laura refined the manners of the lettered world, and filled Europe with love and poetry. But the basis of all excellence is truth: he that professes love ought to feel its power. Petrarch was a real lover, and Laura doubtless deserved his tenderness. Of Cowley we are told by Barnes *, who had means enough of information, that, whatever he may talk of his own inflammability, and the variety of characters by which his heart was divided, he in reality was in love but once, and then never had resolution to tell his passion.

This consideration cannot but abate, in some measure, the reader's esteem for the work and the author. To love excellence is natural; it is natural likewise for the lover to solicit reciprocal regard by an elaborate display of his own qualifications. The desire of pleasing has in different men produced actions of heroism, and effusions of wit; but it seems as reasonable to appear the champion as the poet of an "airy nothing," and

* Barnesii Anacreontem. Dr. J.

to quarrel as to write for what Cowley might have learned from his master Pindar to call the "dream of a shadow."

It is surely not difficult, in the solitude of a college, or in the bustle of the world, to find useful studies and serious employment. No man needs to be so burthened with life as to squander it in voluntary dreams of fictitious occurrences. The man that sits down to suppose himself charged with treason or peculation, and heats his mind to an elaborate purgation of his character from crimes which he was never within the possibility of committing, differs only by the infrequency of his folly from him who praises beauty which he never saw; complains of jealousy which he never felt; supposes himself sometimes invited, and sometimes forsaken; fatigues his fancy, and ransacks his memory, for images which may exhibit the gaiety of hope, or the gloominess of despair, and dresses his imaginary Chloris or Phyllis sometimes in flowers fading as her beauty, and sometimes in gems lasting as her virtues.

At Paris, as secretary to lord Jermyn, he was

engaged in transacting things of real importance with real men and real women, and at that time did not much employ his thoughts upon phantoms of gallantry. Some of his letters to Mr. Bennet, afterwards earl of Arlington, from April to December in 1650, are preserved in "Miscellanea Aulica," a collection of papers published by Brown. These letters, being written like those of other men whose mind is more on things than words, contribute no otherwise to his reputation than as they shew him to have been above the affectation of unseasonable elegance, and to have known that the business of a statesman can be little forwarded by flowers of rhetorick.

One passage, however, seems not unworthy of some notice. Speaking of the Scotch treaty then in agitation:

"The Scotch treaty," says he, "is the only "thing now in which we are vitally concerned; "I am one of the last hopers, and yet cannot "now abstain from believing that an agreement "will be made: all people upon the place incline "to that of union. The Scotch will moderate

"something of the rigour of their demands; "the mutual necessity of an accord is visible; "the king is persuaded of it. And to tell you "the truth (which I take to be an argument "above all the rest), Virgil has told the same "thing to that purpose."

This expression from a secretary of the present time would be considered as merely ludicrous, or at most as an ostentatious display of scholarship; but the manners of that time were so tinged with superstition, that I cannot but suspect Cowley of having consulted on this great occasion the Virgilian Lots *, and to have given some credit to the answer of his oracle.

* Virgilian Lots (Sortes Virgilianæ) is a method of divination by the opening of Virgil, and applying to the circumstances of the peruser the first passage in either of the two pages that he accidentally fixes his eye on. King Charles I. and lord Falkland, being in the Bodleian library, made this experiment of their future fortunes, and met with passages equally ominous to each. That of the king was the following:

At bello audacis populi vexatus & armis,
Finibus extorris, complexu avulsus Iuli,

Some years afterwards, "business," says Sprat, "passed of course into other hands;" and Cowley,

Auxilium imploret, videatque indigna suorum
Funera, nec, cum se sub leges pacis iniquæ
Tradiderit, regno aut optata luce fruatur:
Sed cadat ante diem, mediaque inhumatus arena.
Æneid, book IV. line 615.

Yet let a race untam'd, and haughty foes,
His peaceful entrance with dire arms oppose,
Oppress'd with numbers in th' unequal field,
His men discourag'd, and himself expell'd:
Let him for succour sue from place to place,
Torn from his subjects and his son's embrace.
First let him see his friends in battle slain,
And their untimely fate lament in vain;
And when, at length, the cruel war shall cease,
On hard conditions may he buy his peace;
Nor let him then enjoy supreme command,
But fall untimely by some hostile hand,
And lie unburied on the barren sand.

DRYDEN.

Lord FALKLAND's:

Non hæc, O Palla, dederas promissa parenti,
Cautius ut sævo velles te credere Marti.
Haud ignarus eram, quantum nova gloria in armis,
Et prædulce decus primo certamine posset.
Primitiæ juvenis miseræ, bellique propinqui
Dura rudimenta, & nulli exaudita Deorum,
Vota precesque meæ! Æneid, book XI. line 152.

O Pallas, thou hast fail'd thy plighted word,
To fight with caution, not to tempt the sword;
I warn'd thee, but in vain, for well I knew
What perils youthful ardour would pursue;

being no longer useful at Paris, was in 1656 sent back into England, that, "under pretence of "privacy and retirement, he might take occasion "of giving notice of the posture of things in "this nation."

Soon after his return to London, he was seized by some messengers of the usurping powers, who were sent out in quest of another man; and, being examined, was put into confinement, from which he was not dismissed without the security of a thousand pounds given by Dr. Scarborough.

This year he published his poems, with a preface, in which he seems to have inserted some-

That boiling blood would carry thee too far,
Young as thou wert, to dangers raw, to war.
O curst essay of arms, disastrous doom,
Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come;
Hard elements of unauspicious war,
Vain vows to Heaven, and unavailing care! DRYDEN.

Hoffman gives a very satisfactory account of this practice of seeking fates in books; and says, that it was used by the Pagans, the Jewish Rabbins, and even the early Christians; the latter taking the New Testament for their oracle.

thing, suppressed in subsequent editions, which was interpreted to denote some relaxation of his loyalty. In this preface he declares, that "his "desire had been for some days past, and did still "very vehemently continue, to retire himself to "some of the American plantations, and to for-"sake this world for ever."

From the obloquy which the appearance of submission to the usurpers brought upon him, his biographer has been very diligent to clear him, and indeed it does not seem to have lessened his reputation. His wish for retirement we can easily believe to be undissembled: a man harassed in one kingdom, and persecuted in another, who, after a course of business that employed all his days and half his nights in cyphering and decyphering, comes to his own country and steps into a prison, will be willing enough to retire to some place of quiet and of safety. Yet let neither our reverence for a genius, nor our pity for a sufferer, dispose us to forget that, if his activity was virtue, his retreat was cowardice.

He then took upon himself the character of

physician, still, according to Sprat, with intention "to dissemble the main design of his coming "over:" and, as Mr. Wood relates, "complying "with the men then in power (which was much "taken notice of by the royal party), he ob- "tained an order to be created doctor of physick; "which being done to his mind (whereby he "gained the ill-will of some of his friends), he "went into France again, having made a copy of "verses on Oliver's death."

This is no favourable representation, yet even in this not much wrong can be discovered. How far he complied with the men in power, is to be inquired before he can be blamed. It is not said that he told them any secrets, or assisted them by intelligence, or any other act. If he only promised to be quiet, that they in whose hands he was might free him from confinement, he did what no law of society prohibits.

The man whose miscarriage in a just cause has put him in the power of his enemy may, without any violation of his integrity, regain his liberty, or preserve his life, by a promise of neutrality:

for the stipulation gives the enemy nothing which he had not before; the neutrality of a captive may be always secured by his imprisonment or death. He that is at the disposal of another may not promise to aid him in any injurious act, because no power can compel active obedience. He may engage to do nothing, but not to do ill.

There is reason to think that Cowley promised little. It does not appear that his compliance gained him confidence enough to be trusted without security, for the bond of his bail was never cancelled; nor that it made him think himself secure, for at that dissolution of government which followed the death of Oliver he returned into France, where he resumed his former station, and staid till the Restoration.

"He continued," says his biographer, "under "these bonds till the general deliverance:" it is therefore to be supposed, that he did not go to France, and act again for the king, without the consent of his bondsman; that he did not shew his loyalty at the hazard of his friend, but by his friend's permission.

Of the verses on Oliver's death, in which Wood's narrative seems to imply something encomiastick, there has been no appearance. There is a discourse concerning his government, indeed, with verses intermixed, but such as certainly gained its author no friends among the abettors of usurpation.

A doctor of physick however he was made at Oxford, in December, 1657; and in the commencement of the Royal Society, of which an account has been given by Dr. Birch, he appears busy among the experimental philosophers with the title of Dr. Cowley.

There is no reason for supposing that he ever attempted practice; but his preparatory studies have contributed something to the honour of his country. Considering botany as necessary to a physician, he retired into Kent to gather plants; and as the predominance of a favourite study affects all subordinate operations of the intellect, botany in the mind of Cowley turned into poetry. He composed in Latin several books on plants, of which the first and second display the qualities of

herbs, in elegiac verse; the third and fourth, the beauties of flowers, in various measures; and in the fifth and sixth, the uses of trees, in heroick numbers.

At the same time were produced from the same university the two great poets Cowley and Milton, of dissimilar genius, of opposite principles; but concurring in the cultivation of Latin poetry, in which the English, till their works and May's poem appeared*, seemed unable to contest the palm with any other of the lettered nations.

If the Latin performances of Cowley and Milton be compared (for May I hold to be superior to both), the advantage seems to lie on the side of Cowley. Milton is generally content to express the thoughts of the ancients in their language; Cowley, without much loss of purity or elegance, accommodates the diction of Rome to his own conceptions.

* Lucan's Pharsalia to the death of Julius Cæsar, by Thomas May, an eminent poet and historian, who flourished in the reigns of James and Charles I.

At the Restoration, after all the diligence of his long service, and with consciousness not only of the merit of fidelity, but of the dignity of great abilities, he naturally expected ample preferments; and, that he might not be forgotten by his own fault, wrote a Song of Triumph. But this was a time of such general hope, that great numbers were inevitably disappointed; and Cowley found his reward very tediously delayed. He had been promised by both Charles the First and Second the mastership of the Savoy; "but "he lost it," says Wood, "by certain persons, "enemies to the Muses."

The neglect of the court was not his only mortification. Having, by such alteration as he thought proper, fitted his old comedy of "The Guardian" for the stage, he produced it under the title of "The Cutter of Coleman-street." It was treated on the stage with great severity, and was afterwards censured as a satire on the king's party.

Mr. Dryden, who went with Mr. Sprat to the first exhibition, related to Mr. Dennis, "that "when they told Cowley, how little favour had

" been shewn him, he received the news of his " ill success, not with so much firmness as might " have been expected from so great a man."

What firmness they expected, or what weakness Cowley discovered, cannot be known. He that misses his end will never be as much pleased as he that attains it, even when he can impute no part of his failure to himself; and when the end is to please the multitude, no man, perhaps, has a right, in things admitting of gradation and comparison, to throw the whole blame upon his judges, and totally to exclude diffidence and shame by a haughty consciousness of his own excellence.

For the rejection of this play it is difficult now to find the reason: it certainly has, in a very great degree, the power of fixing attention and exciting merriment. From the charge of disaffection he exculpates himself in his preface, by observing how unlikely it is that, having followed the royal family through all their distresses, " he " should chuse the time of their restoration to " begin a quarrel with them." It appears, however, from the Theatrical Register of Downes the

prompter, to have been popularly considered as a satire on the royalists.

That he might shorten this tedious suspense, he published his pretensions and his discontent, in an ode called " The Complaint;" in which he styles himself the *melancholy* Cowley. This met with the usual fortune of complaints, and seems to have excited more contempt than pity.

These unlucky incidents are brought, maliciously enough, together in some stanzas, written about that time, on the choice of a laureat; a mode of satire, by which, since it was first introduced by Suckling, perhaps every generation of poets has been teased:

Savoy-missing Cowley came into the court,
Making apologies for his bad play;
Every one gave him so good a report,
That Apollo gave heed to all he could say:

Nor would he have had, 'tis thought, a rebuke,
Unless he had done some notable folly;
Writ verses unjustly in praise of Sam Tuke,
Or printed his pitiful Melancholy.

His vehement desire of retirement now came

again upon him. "Not finding," says the morose Wood, "that preferment conferred upon him "which he expected, while others for their "money carried away most places, he retired "discontented into Surrey."

"He was now," says the courtly Sprat, "weary "of the vexations and formalities of an active "condition. He had been perplexed with a long "compliance to foreign manners. He was sa- "tiated with the arts of a court; which sort of "life, though his virtue made it innocent to him, "yet nothing could make it quiet. Those were "the reasons that made him to follow the violent "inclination of his own mind, which, in the "greatest throng of his former business, had still "called upon him, and represented to him the "true delights of solitary studies, of temperate "pleasures, and a moderate revenue below the "malice and flatteries of fortune."

So differently are things seen, and so differently are they shewn; but actions are visible, though motives are secret. Cowley certainly retired; first to Barn-elms, and afterwards to Chert-

sey, in Surrey. He seems, however, to have lost part of his dread of the *hum of men**. He thought himself now safe enough from intrusion, without the defence of mountains and oceans; and, instead of seeking shelter in America, wisely went only so far from the bustle of life as that he might easily find his way back, when solitude should grow tedious. His retreat was at first but slenderly accommodated; yet he soon obtained, by the interest of the earl of St. Albans and the duke of Buckingham, such a lease of the queen's lands as afforded him an ample income.

By the lover of virtue and of wit it will be solicitously asked, if he now was happy. Let them peruse one of his letters accidentally preserved by Peck, which I recommend to the consideration of all that may hereafter pant for solitude.

" To Dr. THOMAS SPRAT.

" Chertsey, 21 May, 1665.

" The first night that I came hither I caught " so great a cold, with a defluxion of rheum, as

* L'Allegro of Milton. Dr. J.

" made me keep my chamber ten days. And, " two after, had such a bruise on my ribs with a " fall, that I am yet unable to move or turn my- " self in my bed. This is my personal fortune " here to begin with. And, besides, I can get no " money from my tenants, and have my meadows " eaten up every night by cattle put in by my " neighbours. What this signifies, or may come " to in time, God knows; if it be ominous, it " can end in nothing less than hanging. Another " misfortune has been, and stranger than all the " rest, that you have broke your word with me, " and failed to come, even though you told Mr. " Bois that you would. This is what they call " *Monstri simile.* I do hope to recover my late " hurt so farre within five or six days (though it " be uncertain yet whether I shall ever recover it) " as to walk about again. And then, methinks, " you and I and *the Dean* might be very merry " upon S. Anne's Hill. You might very conve- " niently come hither the way of Hampton Town, " lying there one night. I write this in pain, and " can say no more: *Verbum sapienti.*"

He did not long enjoy the pleasure or suffer the

uneasiness of solitude; for he died at the Porch-house * in Chertsey in 1667, in the 49th year of his age.

He was buried with great pomp near Chaucer and Spenser; and king Charles pronounced, "That Mr. Cowley had not left behind him a "better man in England." He is represented by Dr. Sprat as the most amiable of mankind; and this posthumous praise may safely be credited, as it has never been contradicted by envy or by faction.

Such are the remarks and memorials which I have been able to add to the narrative of Dr. Sprat; who, writing when the feuds of the civil war were yet recent, and the minds of either party were easily irritated, was obliged to pass over many transactions in general expressions, and to leave curiosity often unsatisfied. What he did not tell, cannot however now be known. I must therefore recommend the perusal of his work, to

* Now in the possession of Mr. Clark, chamberlain of London.

which my narration can be considered only as a slender supplement.

COWLEY, like other poets who have written with narrow views, and, instead of tracing intellectual pleasures in the minds of man, paid their court to temporary prejudices, has been at one time too much praised, and too much neglected at another.

Wit, like all other things subject by their nature to the choice of man, has its changes and fashions, and at different times takes different forms. About the beginning of the seventeenth century appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets; of whom, in a criticism on the works of Cowley, it is not improper to give some account.

The metaphysical poets were men of learning, and to shew their learning was their whole endeavour; but, unluckily resolving to shew it in rhyme, instead of writing poetry they only wrote

verses, and very often such verses as stood the trial of the finger better than of the ear; for the modulation was so imperfect, that they were only found to be verses by counting the syllables.

If the father of criticism has rightly denominated poetry τεχνη μιμητικη, *an imitative art*, these writers will, without great wrong, lose their right to the name of poets; for they cannot be said to have imitated any thing; they neither copied nature for life; neither painted the forms of matter, nor represented the operations of intellect.

Those however who deny them to be poets, allow them to be wits. Dryden confesses of himself and his contemporaries, that they fall below Donne in wit, but maintains that they surpass him in poetry.

If wit be well described by Pope, as being "that which has been often thought, but was "never before so well expressed," they certainly never attained, nor ever sought it; for they endeavoured to be singular in their thoughts, and were careless of their diction. But Pope's account

of wit is undoubtedly erroneous: he depresses it below its natural dignity, and reduces it from strength of thought to happiness of language.

If, by a more noble and more adequate conception, that be considered as wit, which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is, upon its first production, acknowledged to be just; if it be that, which he that never found it wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness of industry they were ever found.

But wit, abstracted from its effects upon the hearer, may be more rigorously and philosophically considered as a kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Of wit, thus defined, they have more than enough. The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together; nature and art are

ransacked for illustrations, comparisons, and allusions; their learning instructs, and their subtility surprises; but the reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought, and, though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased.

From this account of their compositions it will be readily inferred, that they were not successful in representing or moving the affections. As they were wholly employed on something unexpected and surprising, they had no regard to that uniformity of sentiment which enables us to conceive and to excite the pains and the pleasure of other minds: they never inquired what, on any occasion, they should have said or done; but wrote rather as beholders than partakers of human nature; as beings looking upon good and evil, impassive and at leisure; as Epicurean deities making remarks on the actions of men, and the vicissitudes of life, without interest and without emotion. Their courtship was void of fondness, and their lamentation of sorrow. Their wish was only to say what they hoped had been never said before.

Nor was the sublime more within their reach

than the pathetick; for they never attempted that comprehension and expanse of thought which at once fills the whole mind, and of which the first effect is sudden astonishment, and the second rational admiration. Sublimity is produced by aggregation, and littleness by dispersion. Great thoughts are always general, and consist in positions not limited by exceptions, and in descriptions not descending to minuteness. It is with great propriety that subtlety, which in its original import means exility of particles, is taken in its metaphorical meaning for nicety of distinction. Those writers who lay on the watch for novelty could have little hope of greatness; for great things cannot have escaped former observation. Their attempts were always analytick; they broke every image into fragments; and could no more represent, by their slender conceits and laboured particularities, the prospects of nature, or the scenes of life, than he who dissects a sunbeam with a prism can exhibit the wide effulgence of a summer noon.

What they wanted however of the sublime, they endeavoured to supply by hyperbole; their amplification had no limits; they left not only

reason but fancy behind them; and produced combinations of confused magnificence, that not only could not be credited, but could not be imagined.

Yet great labour, directed by great abilities, is never wholly lost: if they frequently threw away their wit upon false conceits, they likewise sometimes struck out unexpected truth: if their conceits were far-fetched, they were often worth the carriage. To write on their plan, it was at least necessary to read and think. No man could be born a metaphysical poet, nor assume the dignity of a writer by descriptions copied from descriptions, by imitations borrowed from imitations, by traditional imagery, and hereditary similies, by readiness of rhyme, and volubility of syllables.

In perusing the works of this race of authors, the mind is exercised either by recollection or inquiry; either something already learned is to be retrieved, or something new is to be examined. If their greatness seldom elevates, their acuteness often surprises; if the imagination is not always gratified, at least the powers of re-

flection and comparison are employed; and in the mass of materials which ingenious absurdity has thrown together, genuine wit and useful knowledge may be sometimes found, buried perhaps in grossness of expression, but useful to those who know their value; and such as, when they are expanded to perspicuity, and polished to elegance, may give lustre to works which have more propriety though less copiousness of sentiment.

This kind of writing, which was, I believe, borrowed from Marino and his followers, had been recommended by the example of Donne, a man of a very extensive and various knowledge; and by Jonson, whose manner resembled that of Donne more in the ruggedness of his lines than in the cast of his sentiments.

When their reputation was high, they had undoubtedly more imitators than time has left behind. Their immediate successors, of whom any remembrance can be said to remain, were Suckling, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Cleiveland, and Milton. Denham and Waller sought another way to fame, by improving the harmony of our

numbers. Milton tried the metaphysick style only in his lines upon Hobson the Carrier. Cowley adopted it, and excelled his predecessors, having as much sentiment and more music. Suckling neither improved versification, nor abounded in conceits. The fashionable style remained chiefly with Cowley; Suckling could not reach it, and Milton disdained it.

CRITICAL REMARKS are not easily understood without examples; and I have therefore collected instances of the modes of writing by which this species of poets, for poets they were called by themselves and their admirers, was eminently distinguished.

As the authors of this race were perhaps more desirous of being admired than understood, they sometimes drew their conceits from recesses of learning not very much frequented by common readers of poetry. Thus Cowley on *Knowledge*:

The sacred tree 'midst the fair orchard grew;
The phœnix Truth did on it rest,
And built his perfum'd nest,
That right Porphyrian tree which did true logic shew.

Each leaf did learned notions give,
And th' apples were demonstrative:
So clear their colour and divine,
The very shade they cast did other lights outshine.

On Anacreon continuing a lover in his old age:

Love was with thy life entwin'd,
Close as heat with fire is join'd,
A powerful brand prescrib'd the date
Of thine, like Meleager's fate.
Th' antiperistasis of age
More enflam'd thy amorous rage.

In the following verses we have an allusion to a rabbinical opinion concerning manna:

Variety I ask not: give me one
To live perpetually upon.
The person Love does to us fit,
Like manna, has the taste of all in it.

Thus *Donne* shews his medicinal knowledge in some encomiastick verses:

In every thing there naturally grows
A balsamum to keep it fresh and new,
If 'twere not injur'd by extrinsique blows;
Your youth and beauty are this balm in you.

But you, of learning and religion,
And virtue and such ingredients, have made
A mithridate, whose operation
Keeps off, or cures, what can be done or said.

Though the following lines of Donne, on the last night of the year, have something in them too scholastic, they are not inelegant:

This twilight of two years, not past nor next,
Some emblem is of me, or I of this,
Who, meteor-like, of stuff and form perplext,
Whose what and where in disputation is,
If I should call me any thing, should miss.
I sum the years and me, and find me not
Debtor to th' old, nor creditor to th' new,
That cannot say, my thanks I have forgot,
Nor trust I this with hopes; and yet scarce true
This bravery is, since these times shew'd me you.

DONNE.

Yet more abstruse and profound is *Donne*'s reflection upon man as a microcosm:

If men be worlds, there is in every one
Something to answer in some proportion
All the world's riches: and in good men, this
Virtue, our form's form, and our soul's soul is.

OF thoughts so far fetched, as to be not only unexpected, but unnatural, all their books are full.

To a Lady, who wrote poesies for rings.

They, who above do various circles find,
Say, like a ring th' æquator heaven does bind.
When heaven shall be adorn'd by thee,
(Which then more heaven than 'tis, will be)
'Tis thou must write the poesy there,
For it wanteth one as yet,
Then the sun pass through 't twice a year,
The sun, which is esteem'd the god of wit.

COWLEY.

The difficulties which have been raised about identity in philosophy, are by Cowley with still more perplexity applied to Love:

Five years ago (says story) I lov'd you,
For which you call me most inconstant now;
Pardon me, madam, you mistake the man;
For I am not the same that I was then;
No flesh is now the same 'twas then in me,
And that my mind is chang'd yourself may see.
The same thoughts to retain still, and intents,
Were more inconstant far: for accidents
Must of all things most strangely inconstant prove,
If from one subject they t' another move:
My members then, the father members were
From whence these take their birth, which now are here.

If then this body love what th' other did,
'T were incest, which by nature is forbid.

The love of different women is, in geographical poetry, compared to travels through different countries:

Hast thou not found each woman's breast
(The land where thou hast travelled)
Either by savages possest,
Or wild, and uninhabited?
What joy couldst take, or what repose,
In countries so uncivilis'd as those?
Lust, the scorching dog-star, here
Rages with immoderate heat;
Whilst Pride, the rugged Northern Bear,
In others makes the cold too great.
And where these are temperate known,
The soil's all barren sand, or rocky stone.

COWLEY.

A lover burnt up by his affection is compared to Egypt:

The fate of Egypt I sustain,
And never feel the dew of rain
From clouds which in the head appear;
But all my too much moisture owe
To overflowings of the heart below.

COWLEY.

The lover supposes his lady acquainted with the ancient laws of augury and rites of sacrifice:

And yet this death of mine, I fear,
Will ominous to her appear:
When sound in every other part,
Her sacrifice is found without an heart.
For the last tempest of my death
Shall sigh out that too, with my breath.

That the chaos was harmonised, has been recited of old; but whence the different sounds arose remained for a modern to discover:

Th' ungovern'd parts no correspondence knew;
An artless war from thwarting motions grew;
Till they to number and fixt rules were brought.
Water and air he for the tenor chose,
Earth made the base; the treble, flame arose.

COWLEY.

The tears of lovers are always of great poetical account; but Donne has extended them into worlds. If the lines are not easily understood, they may be read again:

On a round ball
A workman, that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that, which was nothing, all.

So doth each tear,
Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mixt with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee my heaven dissolved so.

On reading the following lines, the reader may perhaps cry out—*Confusion worse confounded.*

Here lies a she sun, and a he moon here,
She gives the best light to his sphere,
Or each is both, and all, and so
They unto one another nothing owe.

DONNE.

Who but Donne would have thought that a good man is a telescope?

Though God be our true glass through which we see
All, since the being of all things is he,
Yet are the trunks, which do to us derive
Things in proportion fit, by perspective
Deeds of good men; for by their living here,
Virtues, indeed remote, seem to be near.

Who would imagine it possible that in a very few lines so many remote ideas could be brought together?

Since 'tis my doom, Love's undershrieve,
Why this reprieve?
Why doth my she advowson fly
Incumbency?
To sell thyself dost thou intend
By candle's end,
And hold the contrast thus in doubt,
Life's taper out?
Think but how soon the market fails,
Your sex lives faster than the males;
And if to measure age's span,
The sober Julian were th' account of man,
Whilst you live by the fleet Gregorian.

CLEIVELAND.

Of enormous and disgusting hyperboles, these may be examples:

By every wind that comes this way,
Send me at least a sigh or two,
Such and so many I'll repay
As shall themselves make winds to get to you.

COWLEY.

In tears I'll waste these eyes,
By Love so vainly fed;
So lust of old the Deluge punished.

COWLEY.

All arm'd in brass the richest dress of war,
(A dismal glorious sight) he shone afar.
The sun himself started with sudden fright,
To see his beams return so dismal bright.

COWLEY.

An universal consternation:

His bloody eyes he hurls round, his sharp paws
Tear up the ground; then runs he wild about,
Lashing his angry tail and roaring out.
Beasts creep into their dens, and tremble there;
Trees, though no wind is stirring, shake with fear;
Silence and horror fill the place around:
Echo itself dares scarce repeat the sound.

COWLEY.

THEIR fictions were often violent and unnatural.

Of his mistress bathing:

The fish around her crowded, as they do
To the false light that treacherous fishers shew,
And all with as much ease might taken be,
As she at first took me:
For ne'er did light so clear

Among the waves appear,
Though every night the sun himself set there.

COWLEY.

The poetical effect of a lover's name upon glass:

My name engrav'd herein
Doth contribute my firmness to this glass;
Which, ever since that charm, hath been
As hard as that which grav'd it was.

DONNE.

Their conceits were sometimes slight and trifling.

On an inconstant woman:

He enjoys the calmy sunshine now,
And no breath stirring hears,
In the clear heaven of thy brow,
No smallest cloud appears.
He sees thee gentle, fair and gay,
And trusts the faithless April of thy May.

COWLEY.

Upon a paper written with the juice of lemon, and read by the fire:

Nothing yet in thee is seen,
But when a genial heat warms thee within,

A new-born wood of various lines there grows;
Here buds an L, and there a B,
Here spouts a V, and there a T,
And all the flourishing letters stand in rows.

COWLEY.

As they sought only for novelty, they did not much inquire whether their allusions were to things high or low, elegant or gross; whether they compared the little to the great, or the great to the little.

Physick and chirurgery for a lover:

Gently, ah gently, madam, touch
The wound, which you yourself have made;
That pain must needs be very much,
Which makes me of your hand afraid.
Cordials of pity give me now,
For I too weak of purgings grow.

COWLEY.

The world and a clock:

Mahol th' inferior world's fantastic face
Thro' all the turns of matter's maze did trace;
Great Nature's well-set clock in pieces took;
On all the springs and smallest wheels did look
Of life and motion, and with equal art
Made up the whole again of every part.

COWLEY.

A coal-pit has not often found its poet; but that it may not want its due honour, Cleiveland has paralleled it with the sun:

The moderate value of our guiltless ore
Makes no man atheist, and no woman whore;
Yet why should hallow'd vestal's sacred shrine
Deserve more honour than a flaming mine?
These pregnant wombs of heat would fitter be,
Than a few embers, for a deity.
Had he our pits, the Persian would admire
No sun, but warm's devotion at our fire:
He'd leave the trotting whipster, and prefer
Our profound Vulcan 'bove that waggoner.
For wants he heat, or light? or would have store
Of both? 'tis here: and what can suns give more?
Nay, what's the sun but, in a different name,
A coal-pit rampant, or a mine on flame?
Then let this truth reciprocally run,
The sun's heaven's coalery, and coals our sun.

Death, a voyage:

No family
E'er rigg'd a soul for heaven's discovery,
With whom more venturers might boldly dare
Venture their stakes, with him in joy to share.

DONNE.

Their thoughts and expressions were sometimes grossly absurd, and such as no figures or licence can reconcile to the understanding.

A lover neither dead nor alive:

Then down I laid my head
Down on cold earth; and for a while was dead,
And my freed soul to a strange somewhere fled:
Ah, sottish soul! said I,
When back to its cage again I saw it fly;
Fool, to resume her broken chain!
And row her galley here again!
Fool, to that body to return
Where it condemn'd and destin'd is to burn!
Once dead, how can it be,
Death should a thing so pleasant seem to thee,
That thou shouldst come to live it o'er again in me?

A lover's heart, a hand grenado:

Wo to her stubborn heart, if once mine come
Into the self-same room,
'T will tear and blow up all within,
Like a grenado shot into a magazin.
Then shall Love keep the ashes, and torn parts,
Of both our broken hearts:
Shall out of both one new one make:
From hers th' allay; from mine, the metal take.

COWLEY.

The poetical propagation of light:

The prince's favour is diffus'd o'er all,
From which all fortunes, names, and natures fall;
Then from those wombs of stars, the bride's bright eyes,
At every glance a constellation flies
And sowes the court with stars, and doth prevent
In light and power, the all-ey'd firmament:
First her eye kindles other ladies' eyes,
Then from their beams their jewels lustres rise;
And from their jewels torches do take fire,
And all is warmth, and light, and good desire.

DONNE.

THEY were in very little care to clothe their notions with elegance of dress, and therefore miss the notice and the praise which are often gained by those, who think less, but are more diligent to adorn their thoughts.

That a mistress beloved is fairer in idea than in reality, is by Cowley thus expressed:

Thou in my fancy dost much higher stand,
Than women can be plac'd by Nature's hand;
And I must needs, I'm sure, a loser be,
To change thee, as thou'rt there, for very thee.

That prayer and labour should co-operate, are thus taught by Donne:

In none but us, are such mixt engines found,
As hands of double office; for the ground
We till with them; and them to heaven we raise;
Who prayerless labours, or, without this, prays,
Doth but one half, that's none.

By the same author, a common topick, the danger of procrastination, is thus illustrated:

—— That which I should have begun
In my youth's morning, now late must be done;
And I, as giddy travellers must do,
Which stray or sleep all day, and having lost
Light and strength, dark and tir'd, must then ride post.

All that man has to do is to live and die; the sum of humanity is comprehended by Donne in the following lines:

Think in how poor a prison thou didst lie;
After enabled but to suck and cry.
Think, when 'twas grown to most, 'twas a poor inn,
A province pack'd up in two yards of skin,
And that usurp'd, or threaten'd with a rage
Of sicknesses, or their true mother, age.
But think that death hath now enfranchis'd thee;
Thou hast thy expansion now, and liberty;

Think, that a rusty piece discharg'd is flown
In pieces, and the bullet is his own,
And freely flies: this to thy soul allow,
Think thy shell broke, think thy soul hatch'd but now.

THEY were sometimes indelicate and disgusting. Cowley thus apostrophises Beauty:

—— Thou tyrant, which leav'st no man free!
Thou subtle thief, from whom nought safe can be!
Thour murtherer, which hast kill'd, and devil, which
wouldst damn me.

Thus he addresses his mistress:

Thou who, in many a propriety,
So truly art the sun to me,
Add one more likeness, which I'm sure you can,
And let me and my sun beget a man.

Thus he represents the meditations of a lover:

Though in thy thoughts scarce any tracts have been
So much as of original sin,
Such charms thy beauty wears as might
Desires in dying confest saints excite.
Thou with strange adultery
Dost in each breast a brothel keep;
Awake, all men do lust for thee,
And some enjoy thee when they sleep.

The true taste of tears:

Hither with crystal vials, lovers, come,
And take my tears, which are love's wine,
And try your mistress' tears at home;
For all are false, that taste not just like mine.

DONNE.

This is yet more indelicate:

As the sweet sweat of roses in a still,
As that which from chaf'd musk-cat's pores doth trill,
As the almighty balm of th' early East,
Such are the sweet drops of my mistress' breast.
And on her neck her skin such lustre sets,
They seem no sweat drops, but pearl coronets:
Rank sweaty froth thy mistress' brow defiles.

DONNE.

THEIR expressions sometimes raise horror, when they intend perhaps to be pathetic:

As men in hell are from diseases free,
So from all other ills am I,
Free from their known formality:
But all pains eminently lie in thee.

COWLEY.

THEY were not always strictly curious, whether the opinions from which they drew their illustrations were true; it was enough that they were popular. Bacon remarks, that some falsehoods are continued by tradition, because they supply commodious allusions.

It gave a piteous groan, and so it broke;
In vain it something would have spoke:
The love within too strong for't was,
Like poison put into a Venice-glass.

COWLEY.

IN forming descriptions, they looked out not for images, but for conceits. Night has been a common subject, which poets have contended to adorn. Dryden's Night is well known; Donne's is as follows:

Thou seest me here at midnight, now all rest:
Time's dead low-water; when all minds divest
To-morrow's business, when the labourers have
Such rest in bed, that their last church-yard grave,
Subject to change, will scarce be a type of this,
Now when the client, whose last hearing is
To-morrow, sleeps; when the condemned man,
Who, when he opes his eyes, must shut them then

Again by death, although sad watch he keep,
Doth practise dying by a little sleep,
Thou at this midnight seest me.

IT must be however confessed of these writers, that if they are upon common subjects often unnecessarily and unpoetically subtle; yet where scholastick speculation can be properly admitted, their copiousness and acuteness may justly be admired. What Cowley has written upon Hope, shews an unequalled fertility of invention:

Hope, whose weak being ruin'd is,
Alike if it succeed, and if it miss;
Whom good or ill does equally confound,
And both the horns of Fate's dilemma wound.
Vain shadow, which dost vanish quite,
Both at full noon and perfect night!
The stars have not a possibility
Of blessing thee;
If things then from their end we happy call,
'Tis Hope is the most hopeless thing of all.
Hope, thou bold taster of delight,
Who, whilst thou shouldst but taste, devour'st it quite!
Thou bring'st us an estate, yet leav'st us poor,
By clogging it with legacies before!
The joys which we entire should wed,
Come deflower'd virgins to our bed;

Good fortunes without gain imported be,
Such mighty custom's paid to thee:
For joy, like wine, kept close does better taste;
If it take air before, its spirits waste.

To the following comparison of a man that travels, and his wife that stays at home, with a pair of compasses, it may be doubted whether absurdity or ingenuity has the better claim:

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.
If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin-compasses are two:
Thy soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.
And though it in the centre sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans, and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.
Such wilt thou be to me, who must
Like th' other foot obliquely run.
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

DONNE.

In all these examples it is apparent, that whatever is improper or vicious is produced by a voluntary deviation from nature in pursuit of something new and strange; and that the writers fail to give delight, by their desire of exciting admiration.

HAVING thus endeavoured to exhibit a general representation of the style and sentiments of the metaphysical poets, it is now proper to examine particularly the works of Cowley, who was almost the last of that race, and undoubtedly the best.

His Miscellanies contain a collection of short compositions, written some as they were dictated by a mind at leisure, and some as they were called forth by different occasions; with great variety of style and sentiment, from burlesque levity to awful grandeur. Such an assemblage of diversified excellence no other poet has hitherto afforded. To choose the best, among many good, is one of the most hazardous attempts of criticism.

I know not whether Scaliger himself has persuaded many readers to join with him in his preference of the two favourite odes, which he estimates in his raptures at the value of a kingdom. I will however venture to recommend Cowley's first piece, which ought to be inscribed *To my muse*, for want of which the second couplet is without reference. When the title is added, there will still remain a defect; for every piece ought to contain in itself whatever is necessary to make it intelligible. Pope has some epitaphs without names; which are therefore epitaphs to be lett, occupied indeed for the present, but hardly appropriated.

The ode on wit is almost without a rival. It was about the time of Cowley that *wit*, which had been till then used for *intellection*, in contradistinction to *will*, took the meaning, whatever it be, which it now bears.

Of all the passages in which poets have exemplified their own precepts, none will easily be found of greater excellence than that in which Cowley condemns exuberance of wit:

Yet 'tis not to adorn and gild each part,
That shews more cost than art.
Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
Rather than all things wit, let none be there.
Several lights will not be seen,
If there be nothing else between.
Men doubt, because they stand so thick i' th' sky,
If those be stars which paint the galaxy.

In his verses to lord Falkland, whom every man of his time was proud to praise, there are, as there must be in all Cowley's compositions, some striking thoughts, but they are not well wrought. His elegy on sir Henry Wotton is vigorous and happy, the series of thoughts is easy and natural, and the conclusion, though a little weakened by the intrusion of Alexander, is elegant and forcible.

It may be remarked, that in this elegy, and in most of his encomiastic poems, he has forgotten or neglected to name his heroes.

In his poem on the death of Harvey, there is much praise, but little passion, a very just and ample delineation of such virtues as a studious privacy admits, and such intellectual excellence as

a mind not yet called forth to action can display. He knew how to distinguish, and how to commend the qualities of his companion; but when he wishes to make us weep, he forgets to weep himself, and diverts his sorrow by imagining how his crown of bays, if he had it, would *crackle* in the *fire*. It is the odd fate of this thought to be worse for being true. The bay-leaf crackles remarkably as it burns; as therefore this property was not assigned it by chance, the mind must be thought sufficiently at ease that could attend to such minuteness of physiology. But the power of Cowley is not so much to move the affections, as to exercise the understanding.

The *Chronicle* is a composition unrivalled and alone: such gaiety of fancy, such facility of expression, such varied similitude, such a succession of images, and such a dance of words, it is in vain to expect except from Cowley. His strength always appears in his agility, his volatility is not the flutter of a light, but the bound of an elastic mind. His levity never leaves his learning behind it; the moralist, the politician, and the critick, mingle their influence even in this airy frolick of

genius. To such a performance Suckling could have brought the gaiety, but not the knowledge; Dryden could have supplied the knowledge, but not the gaiety.

The verses to Davenant, which are vigorously begun, and happily concluded, contain some hints of criticism very justly conceived and happily expressed. Cowley's critical abilities have not been sufficiently observed: the few decisions and remarks which his prefaces and his notes on the Davideis supply, were at that time accessions to English literature, and shew such skill as raises our wish for more examples.

The lines from Jersey are a very curious and pleasing specimen of the familiar descending to the burlesque.

His two metrical disquisitions *for* and *against* Reason, are no mean specimens of metaphysical poetry. The stanzas against knowledge produce little conviction. In those which are intended to exalt the human faculties, reason has its proper task assigned it; that of judging, not of things

revealed, but of the reality of revelation. In the verses *for* Reason is a passage which Bentley, in the only English verses which he is known to have written, seems to have copied, though with the inferiority of an imitator.

The holy Book like the eighth sphere doth shine
With thousand lights of truth divine,
So numberless the stars that to our eye
It makes all but one galaxy:
Yet Reason must assist too; for in seas
So vast and dangerous as these,
Our course by stars above we cannot know
Without the compass too below.

After this, says Bentley:

Who travels in religious jars,
Truth mix'd with error, shade with rays,
Like Whiston wanting pyx or stars,
In ocean wide or sinks or strays.

Cowley seems to have had, what Milton is believed to have wanted, the skill to rate his own performances by their just value, and has therefore closed his Miscellanies with the verses upon Crashaw, which apparently excel all that have

gone before them, and in which there are beauties which common authors may justly think not only above their attainment, but above their ambition.

To the Miscellanies succeed the *Anacreontiques*, or paraphrastical translations of some little poems, which pass, however justly, under the name of Anacreon. Of those songs dedicated to festivity and gaiety, in which even the morality is voluptuous, and which teach nothing but the enjoyment of the present day, he has given rather a pleasing than a faithful representation, having retained their spriteliness, but lost their simplicity. The Anacreon of Cowley, like the Homer of Pope, has admitted the decoration of some modern graces, by which he is undoubtedly more amiable to common readers, and perhaps, if they would honestly declare their own perceptions, to far the greater part of those whom courtesy and ignorance are content to style the learned.

These little pieces will be found more finished in their kind than any other of Cowley's works. The diction shews nothing of the mould of time, and the sentiments are at no great distance from

our present habitudes of thought. Real mirth must be always natural, and nature is uniform. Men have been wise in very different modes; but they have always laughed the same way.

Levity of thought naturally produced familiarity of language, and the familiar part of language continues long the same: the dialogue of comedy, when it is transcribed from popular manners and real life, is read from age to age with equal pleasure. The artifices of inversion, by which the established order of words is changed, or of innovation, by which new words or new meanings of words are introduced, is practised, not by those who talk to be understood, but by those who write to be admired.

The Anacreontiques therefore of Cowley give now all the pleasure which they ever gave. If he was formed by nature for one kind of writing more than for another, his power seems to have been greatest in the familiar and the festive.

The next class of his poems is called *The Mistress*, of which it is not necessary to select any

particular pieces for praise or censure. They have all the same beauties and faults, and nearly in the same proportion. They are written with exuberance of wit, and with copiousness of learning; and it is truly asserted by Sprat, that the plenitude of the writer's knowledge flows in upon his page, so that the reader is commonly surprised into some improvement. But, considered as the verses of a lover, no man that has ever loved will much commend them. They are neither courtly nor pathetick, have neither gallantry nor fondness. His praises are too far sought, and too hyperbolical, either to express love, or to excite it; every stanza is crowded with darts and flames, with wounds and death, with mingled souls, and with broken hearts.

The principal artifice by which *The Mistress* is filled with conceits is very copiously displayed by Addison. Love is by Cowley, as by other poets, expressed metaphorically by flame and fire; and that which is true of real fire is said of love, or figurative fire, the same word in the same sentence retaining both significations. Thus, "observing "the cold regard of his mistress's eyes, and at

" the same time their power of producing love in
" him, he considers them as burning glasses made
" of ice. Finding himself able to live in the
" greatest extremities of love, he concludes the
" torrid zone to be habitable. Upon the dying
" of a tree, on which he had cut his loves, he
" observes, that his flames had burnt up and
" withered the tree."

These conceits Addison calls mixed wit; that is, wit which consists of thoughts true in one sense of the expression, and false in the other. Addison's representation is sufficiently indulgent. That confusion of images may entertain for a moment; but, being unnatural, it soon grows wearisome. Cowley delighted in it, as much as if he had invented it; but, not to mention the ancients, he might have found it full-blown in modern Italy. Thus Sannazaro:

Aspice quam variis distringar Lesbia curis!
Uror, & heu! nostro manat ab igne liquor;
Sum Nilus, sumque Ætna simul; restringite flammas,
O lacrimæ, aut lacrimas ebibe flamma meas.

One of the severe theologians of that time cen-

sured him as having published *a book of profane and lascivious verses.* From the charge of profaneness, the constant tenour of his life, which seems to have been eminently virtuous, and the general tendency of his opinions, which discover no irreverence of religion, must defend him; but that the accusation of lasciviousness is unjust, the perusal of his works will sufficiently evince.

Cowley's *Mistress* has no power of seduction: "she plays round the head, but reaches not the "heart." Her beauty and absence, her kindness and cruelty, her disdain and inconstancy, produce no correspondence of emotion. His poetical account of the virtues of plants, and colours of flowers, is not perused with more sluggish frigidity. The compositions are such as might have been written for penance by a hermit, or for hire by a philosophical rhymer who had only heard of another sex; for they turn the mind only on the writer, whom, without thinking on a woman but as the subject for his task, we sometimes esteem as learned, and sometimes despise as trifling, always admire as ingenious, and always condemn as unnatural.

The Pindarique Odes are now to be considered; a species of composition, which Cowley thinks Pancirolus might have counted *in his list of the last inventions of antiquity*, and which he has made a bold and vigorous attempt to recover.

The purpose with which he has paraphrased an Olympick and Nemæan ode, is by himself sufficiently explained. His endeavour was, not to shew *precisely what Pindar spoke, but his manner of speaking*. He was therefore not at all restrained to his expressions, nor much to his sentiments; nothing was required of him, but not to write as Pindar would not have written.

Of the Olympick ode the beginning is, I think, above the original in elegance, and the conclusion below it in strength. The connection is supplied with great perspicuity, and the thoughts, which to a reader of less skill seem thrown together by chance, are concatenated without any abruption. Though the English ode cannot be called a translation, it may be very properly consulted as a commentary.

The spirit of Pindar is indeed not every where equally preserved. The following pretty lines are not such as his *deep mouth* was used to pour:

> Great Rhea's son,
> If in Olympus' top, where thou
> Sitt'st to behold thy sacred show,
> If in Alpheus' silver flight,
> If in my verse thou take delight,
> My verse, great Rhea's son, which is
> Lofty as that, and smooth as this.

In the Nemæan ode the reader must, in mere justice to Pindar, observe that whatever is said of *the original new moon, her tender forehead and her horns*, is superadded by his paraphrast, who has many other plays of words and fancy unsuitable to the original, as,

> The table, free for every guest,
> No doubt will thee admit,
> And feast more upon thee, than thou on it.

He sometimes extends his author's thoughts without improving them. In the Olympionick an oath is mentioned in a single word, and Cowley spends three lines in swearing by the *Castalian stream*. We are told of Theron's bounty, with a

hint that he had enemies, which Cowley thus enlarges in rhyming prose:

> But in this thankless world the giver
> Is envied even by the receiver;
> 'Tis now the cheap and frugal fashion
> Rather to hide than own the obligation:
> Nay, 'tis much worse than so;
> It now an artifice does grow
> Wrongs and injuries to do,
> Lest men should think we owe.

It is hard to conceive that a man of the first rank in learning and wit, when he was dealing out such minute morality in such feeble diction, could imagine, either waking or dreaming, that he imitated Pindar.

In the following odes, where Cowley chooses his own subjects, he sometimes rises to dignity truly Pindarick; and, if some deficiencies of language be forgiven, his strains are such as those of the Theban bard were to his contemporaries:

> Begin the song, and strike the living lyre:
> Lo how the years to come, a numerous and well-fitted quire,

All hand in hand do decently advance,
And to my song with smooth and equal measure
dance:
While the dance lasts, how long soe'er it be,
My musick's voice shall bear it company;
Till all gentle notes be drown'd
In the last trumpet's dreadful sound.

After such enthusiasm, who will not lament to find the poet conclude with lines like these!

But stop, my muse—
Hold thy Pindaric Pegasus closely in,
Which does to rage begin—
—'Tis an unruly and a hard-mouth'd horse—
'T will no unskilful touch endure,
But flings writer and reader too that sits not sure.

The fault of Cowley, and perhaps of all the writers of the metaphysical race, is that of pursuing his thoughts to the last ramifications, by which he loses the grandeur of generality; for of the greatest things the parts are little; what is little can be but pretty, and by claiming dignity becomes ridiculous. Thus all the power of description is destroyed by a scrupulous enumeration; and the force of metaphors is lost, when the mind by the mention of particulars is turned more

upon the original than the secondary sense, more upon that from which the illustration is drawn than that to which it is applied.

Of this we have a very eminent example in the ode intituled *The Muse*, who goes to *take the air* in an intellectual chariot, to which he harnesses Fancy and Judgement, Wit and Eloquence, Memory and Invention. How he distinguished wit from fancy, or how memory could properly contribute to motion, he has not explained: we are however content to suppose that he could have justified his own fiction, and wish to see the muse begin her career; but there is yet more to be done.

Let the *postillion* Nature mount, and let
The *coachman* Art be set;
And let the airy *footmen*, running all beside,
Make a long row of goodly pride;
Figures, conceits, raptures, and sentences,
In a well-worded dress,
And innocent loves, and pleasant truths, and useful lies,
In all their gaudy *liveries*.

Every mind is now disgusted with this cumber of magnificence; yet I cannot refuse myself the four next lines:

Mount, glorious queen, thy travelling throne,
And bid it to put on;
For long though cheerful is the way,
And life, alas! allows but one ill winter's day.

In the same ode, celebrating the power of the muse, he gives her prescience, or, in poetical language, the foresight of events hatching in futurity; but having once an egg in his mind, he cannot forbear to shew us that he knows what an egg contains:

Thou into the close nests of Time dost peep,
And there with piercing eye
Through the firm shell and the thick white dost spy
Years to come a-forming lie,
Close in their sacred fecundine asleep.

The same thought is more generally, and therefore more poetically, expressed by Casimir, a writer who has many of the beauties and faults of Cowley:

Omnibus mundi Dominator horis
Aptat urgendas per inane pennas,
Pars adhuc nido latet, & futuros
Crescit in annos.

Cowley, whatever was his subject, seems to

have been carried, by a kind of destiny, to the light and the familiar, or to conceits which require still more ignoble epithets. A slaughter in the Red Sea *new dyes the waters' name;* and England, during the civil war, was *Albion no more, nor to be named from white.* It is surely by some fascination not easily surmounted, that a writer professing to revive *the noblest and highest writing in verse,* makes this address to the new year;

Nay, if thou lov'st me, gentle year,
Let not so much as love be there,
Vain fruitless love I mean; for, gentle year,
Although I fear
There 's of this caution little need,
Yet, gentle year, take heed
How thou dost make
Such a mistake;
Such love I mean alone
As by thy cruel predecessors has been shewn;
For, though I have too much cause to doubt it,
I fain would try, for once, if life can live without it.

The reader of this will be inclined to cry out with Prior—

Ye critics, say,
How poor to this was Pindar's style!

Even those who cannot perhaps find in the Isthmian or Nemæan songs what antiquity has disposed them to expect, will at least see that they are ill represented by such puny poetry; and all will determine that, if this be the old Theban strain, it is not worthy of revival.

To the disproportion and incongruity of Cowley's sentiments must be added the uncertainty and looseness of his measures. He takes the liberty of using in any place a verse of any length, from two syllables to twelve. The verses of Pindar have, as he observes, very little harmony to a modern ear; yet by examining the syllables we perceive them to be regular, and have reason enough for supposing that the ancient audiences were delighted with the sound. The imitator ought therefore to have adopted what he found, and to have added what was wanting; to have preserved a constant return of the same numbers, and to have supplied smoothness of transition and continuity of thought.

It is urged by Dr. Sprat, that the *irregularity of numbers is the very thing* which makes *that kind of*

poesy fit for all manner of subjects. But he should have remembered, that what is fit for every thing can fit nothing well. The great pleasure of verse arises from the known measure of the lines, and uniform structure of the stanzas, by which the voice is regulated, and the memory relieved.

If the Pindarick style be, what Cowley thinks it, *the highest and noblest kind of writing in verse*, it can be adapted only to high and noble subjects; and it will not be easy to reconcile the poet with the critick, or to conceive how that can be the highest kind of writing in verse, which, according to Sprat, *is chiefly to be preferred for its near affinity to prose.*

This lax and lawless versification so much concealed the deficiencies of the barren, and flattered the laziness of the idle, that it immediately overspread our books of poetry; all the boys and girls caught the pleasing fashion, and they that could do nothing else could write like Pindar. The rights of antiquity were invaded, and disorder tried to break into the Latin; a poem * on the

* "Carmen Pindaricum in Theatrum Sheldonianum "in solennibus magnifici Operis Encœniis. Recitatum

Sheldonian Theatre, in which all kinds of verse are shaken together, is unhappily inserted in the *Musæ Anglicanæ*. Pindarism prevailed above half a century; but at last died gradually away, and other imitations supply its place.

The Pindarique Odes have so long enjoyed the highest degree of poetical reputation, that I am not willing to dismiss them with unabated censure; and surely though the mode of their composition be erroneous, yet many parts deserve at least that admiration which is due to great comprehension of knowledge, and great fertility of fancy. The thoughts are often new, and often striking; but the greatness of one part is disgraced by the littleness of another; and total negligence of language gives the noblest conceptions the appearance of a fabric august in the plan, but mean in the materials. Yet surely those verses are not without a just claim to praise, of which it may be said with truth, that no man but Cowley could have written them.

" Julii die 9, Anno 1669, a Corbetto Owen, A.B. Æd. " Chr. Alumno, Authore."

The Davideis now remains to be considered; a poem which the author designed to have extended to twelve books, merely, as he makes no scruple of declaring, because the Æneid had that number; but he had leisure or perseverance only to write the third part. Epick poems have been left unfinished by Virgil, Statius, Spenser, and Cowley. That we have not the whole Davideis is, however, not much to be regretted; for in this undertaking Cowley is, tacitly at least, confessed to have miscarried. There are not many examples of so great a work, produced by an author generally read, and generally praised, that has crept through a century with so little regard. Whatever is said of Cowley is meant of his other works. Of the Davideis no mention is made; it never appears in books, nor emerges in conversation. By the *Spectator* it has been once quoted; by *Rymer* it has once been praised; and by *Dryden*, in "Mac Flecknoe," it has once been imitated; nor do I recollect much other notice from its publication till now, in the whole succession of English literature.

Of this silence and neglect if the reason be

inquired, it will be found partly in the choice of the subject, and partly in the performance of the work.

Sacred History has been always read with submissive reverence, and an imagination overawed and controlled. We have been accustomed to acquiesce in the nakedness and simplicity of the authentic narrative, and to repose on its veracity with such humble confidence as suppresses curiosity. We go with the historian as he goes, and stop with him when he stops. All amplification is frivolous and vain; all addition to that which is already sufficient for the purposes of religion, seems not only useless, but in some degree profane.

Such events as were produced by the visible interposition of Divine Power are above the power of human genius to dignify. The miracle of Creation, however it may teem with images, is best described with little diffusion of language: *He spake the word, and they were made.*

We are told that Saul *was troubled with an evil*

spirit; from this Cowley takes an opportunity of describing hell, and telling the history of Lucifer, who was, he says,

> Once general of a gilded host of sprites,
> Like Hesper leading forth the spangled nights;
> But down like lightning, which him struck, he came,
> And roar'd at his first plunge into the flame.

Lucifer makes a speech to the inferior agents of mischief, in which there is something of heathenism, and therefore of impropriety; and, to give efficacy to his words, concludes by lashing *his breast with his long tail.* Envy, after a pause, steps out, and among other declarations of her zeal utters these lines:

> Do thou but threat, loud storms shall make reply,
> And thunder echo to the trembling sky.
> Whilst raging seas swell to so bold an height,
> As shall the fire's proud element affright.
> Th' old drudging Sun, from his long-beaten way,
> Shall at thy voice start, and misguide the day.
> The jocund orbs shall break their measur'd pace,
> And stubborn poles change their allotted place.
> Heaven's gilded troops shall flutter here and there,
> Leaving their boasting songs tun'd to a sphere,

Every reader feels himself weary with this useless talk of an allegorical Being.

It is not only when the events are confessedly miraculous, that fancy and fiction lose their effect: the whole system of life, while the Theocracy was yet visible, has an appearance so different from all other scenes of human action, that the reader of the Sacred Volume habitually considers it as the peculiar mode of existence of a distinct species of mankind, that lived and acted with manners uncommunicable; so that it is difficult even for imagination to place us in the state of them whose story is related, and by consequence their joys and griefs are not easily adopted, nor can the attention be often interested in any thing that befalls them.

To the subject thus originally indisposed to the reception of poetical embellishments, the writer brought little that could reconcile impatience, or attract curiosity. Nothing can be more disgusting than a narrative spangled with conceits, and conceits are all that the Davideis supplies.

One of the great sources of poetical delight is description, or the power of presenting pictures to the mind. Cowley gives inferences instead of images, and shews not what may be supposed to have been seen, but what thoughts the sight might have suggested. When Virgil describes the stone which Turnus lifted against Æneas, he fixes the attention on its bulk and weight:

Saxum circumspicit ingens,
Saxum antiquum, ingens, campo quod forte jacebat
Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

Cowley says of the stone with which Cain slew his brother,

I saw him fling the stone, as if he meant
At once his murther and his monument.

Of the sword taken from Goliah, he says,

A sword so great, that it was only fit
To cut off his great head that came with it.

Other poets describe death by some of its common appearances. Cowley says, with a learned allusion to sepulchral lamps real or fabulous,

'Twixt his right ribs deep pierc'd the furious blade,
And open'd wide those secret vessels where
Life's light goes out, when first they let in air.

But he has allusions vulgar as well as learned. In a visionary succession of kings:

Joas at first does bright and glorious show,
In life's fresh morn his fame does early crow.

Describing an undisciplined army, after having said with elegance,

His forces seem'd no army, but a crowd
Heartless, unarm'd, disorderly, and loud,

he gives them a fit of the ague.

The allusions, however, are not always to vulgar things: he offends by exaggeration as much as by diminution:

The king was plac'd alone, and o'er his head
A well-wrought heaven of silk and gold was spread.

Whatever he writes is always polluted with some conceit:

Where the sun's fruitful beams give metals birth,
Where he the growth of fatal gold does see,
Gold, which alone more influence has than he.

In one passage he starts a sudden question, to the confusion of philosophy:

Ye learned heads, whom ivy garlands grace,
Why does that twining plant the oak embrace?
The oak for courtship most of all unfit,
And rough as are the winds that fight with it.

His expressions have sometimes a degree of meanness that surpasses expectation:

Nay, gentle guests, he cries, since now you 're in,
The story of your gallant friend begin.

In a simile descriptive of the Morning:

As glimmering stars just at th' approach of day,
Cashier'd by troops, at last drop all away.

The dress of Gabriel deserves attention:

He took for skin a cloud most soft and bright,
That e'er the midday sun pierc'd through with light;
Upon his cheeks a lively blush he spread,
Wash'd from the morning beauties deepest red;
An harmless flattering meteor shone for hair,
And fell adown his shoulders with loose care;
He cuts out a silk mantle from the skies,
Where the most sprightly azure pleas'd the eyes;
This he with starry vapours sprinkles all,
Took in their prime ere they grow ripe and fall;

Of a new rainbow ere it fret or fade,
The choicest piece cut out, a scarfe is made.

This is a just specimen of Cowley's imagery: what might in general expressions be great and forcible, he weakens and makes ridiculous by branching it into small parts. That Gabriel was invested with the softest or brightest colours of the sky, we might have been told, and been dismissed to improve the idea in our different proportions of conception; but Cowley could not let us go till he had related where Gabriel got first his skin, and then his mantle, then his lace, and then his scarfe, and related it in the terms of the mercer and taylor.

Sometimes he indulges himself in a digression, always conceived with his natural exuberance, and commonly, even where it is not long, continued till it is tedious:

I' th' library a few choice authors stood,
Yet 'twas well stor'd, for that small store was good;
Writing, man's spiritual physic, was not then
Itself, as now, grown a disease of men.
Learning (young virgin) but few suitors knew;
The common prostitute she lately grew,

And with the spurious brood loads now the press;
Laborious effects of idleness.

As the Davideis affords only four books, though intended to consist of twelve, there is no opportunity for such criticisms as Epick poems commonly supply. The plan of the whole work is very imperfectly shewn by the third part. The duration of an unfinished action cannot be known. Of characters either not yet introduced, or shewn but upon few occasions, the full extent and the nice discriminations cannot be ascertained. The fable is plainly implex, formed rather from the Odyssey than the Iliad: and many artifices of diversification are employed, with the skill of a man acquainted with the best models. The past is recalled by narration, and the future anticipated by vision: but he has been so lavish of his poetical art, that it is difficult to imagine how he could fill eight books more without practising again the same modes of disposing his matter; and perhaps the perception of this growing incumbrance inclined him to stop. By this abruption, posterity lost more instruction than delight. If the continuation of the Davideis can be missed, it is for the learning that had been diffused

over it, and the notes in which it had been explained.

Had not his characters been depraved like every other part by improper decorations, they would have deserved uncommon praise. He gives Saul both the body and mind of a hero:

> His way once chose, he forward thrust outright,
> Nor turn'd aside for danger or delight.

And the different beauties of the lofty Merah and the gentle Michol are very justly conceived and strongly painted.

Rymer has declared the Davideis superior to the *Jerusalem of Tasso*, "which," says he, "the "poet, with all his care, has not totally purged "from pedantry." If by pedantry is meant that minute knowledge which is derived from particular sciences and studies, in opposition to the general notions supplied by a wide survey of life and nature, Cowley certainly errs, by introducing pedantry far more frequently than Tasso. I know not, indeed, why they should be compared; for the resemblance of Cowley's work to Tasso's is

only that they both exhibit the agency of celestial and infernal spirits, in which however they differ widely; for Cowley supposes them commonly to operate upon the mind by suggestion; Tasso represents them as promoting or obstructing events by external agency.

Of particular passages that can be properly compared, I remember only the description of Heaven, in which the different manner of the two writers is sufficiently discernible. Cowley's is scarcely description, unless it be possible to describe by negatives; for he tells us only what there is not in heaven. Tasso endeavours to represent the splendours and pleasures of the regions of happiness. Tasso affords images, and Cowley sentiments. It happens, however, that Tasso's description affords some reason for Rymer's censure. He says of the Supreme Being,

Hà sotto i piedi e fato e la natura
Ministri humili, e'l moto, e ch'il misura.

The second line has in it more of pedantry than perhaps can be found in any other stanza of the poem.

In the perusal of the Davideis, as of all Cowley's works, we find wit and learning unprofitably squandered. Attention has no relief; the affections are never moved; we are sometimes surprised, but never delighted, and find much to admire, but little to approve. Still however it is the work of Cowley, of a mind capacious by nature, and replenished by study.

In the general review of Cowley's poetry it will be found that he wrote with abundant fertility, but negligent or unskilful selection; with much thought, but with little imagery; that he is never pathetick, and rarely sublime, but always either ingenious or learned, either acute or profound.

It is said by Denham in his elegy,

> To him no author was unknown;
> Yet what he writ was all his own.

This wide position requires less limitation, when it is affirmed of Cowley, than perhaps of any other poet.—He read much, and yet borrowed little.

His character of writing was indeed not his own: he unhappily adopted that which was predominant. He saw a certain way to present praise, and not sufficiently inquiring by what means the ancients have continued to delight through all the changes of human manners, he contented himself with a deciduous laurel, of which the verdure in its spring was bright and gay, but which time has been continually stealing from his brows.

He was in his own time considered as of unrivalled excellence. Clarendon represents him as having taken a flight beyond all that went before him; and Milton is said to have declared, that the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley.

His manner he had in common with others; but his sentiments were his own. Upon every subject he thought for himself; and such was his copiousness of knowledge, that something at once remote and applicable rushed into his mind; yet it is not likely that he always rejected a commodious idea merely because another had used it:

his known wealth was so great, that he might have borrowed without loss of credit.

In his elegy on sir Henry Wotton, the last lines have such resemblance to the noble epigram of Grotius upon the death of Scaliger, that I cannot but think them copied from it, though they are copied by no servile hand.

One passage in his *Mistress* is so apparently borrowed from Donne, that he probably would not have written it, had it not mingled with his own thoughts, so as that he did not perceive himself taking it from another:

Although I think thou never found wilt be,
Yet I 'm resolv'd to search for thee;
The search itself rewards the pains.
So, though the chymic his great secret miss,
(For neither it in Art nor Nature is)
Yet things well worth his toil he gains;
And does his charge and labour pay
With good unsought experiments by the way.
COWLEY.

Some that have deeper digg'd Love's mine than I,
Say, where his centric happiness doth lie:
I have lov'd, and got, and told;

But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,
I should not find that hidden mystery;
Oh, 'tis imposture all:
And as no chymic yet th' elixir got,
But glorifies his pregnant pot,
If by the way to him befal
Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal,
So lovers dream a rich and long delight,
But get a winter-seeming summer's night.

Jonson and Donne, as Dr. Hurd remarks, were then in the highest esteem.

It is related by Clarendon, that Cowley always acknowledges his obligation to the learning and industry of Jonson; but I have found no traces of Jonson in his works: to emulate Donne, appears to have been his purpose; and from Donne he may have learned that familiarity with religious images, and that light allusion to sacred things, by which readers far short of sanctity are frequently offended; and which would not be borne in the present age, when devotion, perhaps not more fervent, is more delicate.

Having produced one passage taken by Cowley

from Donne, I will recompense him by another which Milton seems to have borrowed from him. He says of Goliah,

> His spear, the trunk was of a lofty tree,
> Which Nature meant some tall ship's mast should be.

Milton of Satan:

> His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
> Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
> Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
> He walked with.

His diction was in his own time censured as negligent. He seems not to have known, or not to have considered, that words being arbitrary must owe their power to association, and have the influence, and that only, which custom has given them. Language is the dress of thought: and as the noblest mien, or most graceful action, would be degraded and obscured by a garb appropriated to the gross employments of rusticks or mechanicks; so the most heroick sentiments will lose their efficacy, and the most splendid ideas drop their magnificence, if they are conveyed by words used commonly upon low and

trivial occasions, debased by vulgar mouths, and contaminated by inelegant applications.

Truth indeed is always truth, and reason is always reason; they have an intrinsick and unalterable value, and constitute that intellectual gold which defies destruction: but gold may be so concealed in baser matter, that only a chymist can recover it; sense may be so hidden in unrefined and plebeian words, that none but philosophers can distinguish it; and both may be so buried in impurities, as not to pay the cost of their extraction.

The diction, being the vehicle of the thoughts, first presents itself to the intellectual eye; and if the first appearance offends, a further knowledge is not often sought. Whatever professes to benefit by pleasing, must please at once. The pleasures of the mind imply something sudden and unexpected; that which elevates must always surprise. What is perceived by slow degrees may gratify us with consciousness of improvement, but will never strike with the sense of pleasure.

Of all this, Cowley appears to have been without knowledge, or without care. He makes no selection of words, nor seeks any neatness of phrase: he has no elegance either lucky or elaborate: as his endeavours were rather to impress sentences upon the understanding than images on the fancy, he has few epithets, and those scattered without peculiar propriety of nice adaptation. It seems to follow from the necessity of the subject, rather than the care of the writer, that the diction of his heroick poem is less familiar than that of his slightest writings. He has given not the same numbers, but the same diction, to the gentle Anacreon and the tempestuous Pindar.

His versification seems to have had very little of his care; and if what he thinks be true, that his numbers are unmusical only when they are ill read, the art of reading them is at present lost; for they are commonly harsh to modern ears. He has indeed many noble lines, such as the feeble care of Waller never could produce. The bulk of his thoughts sometimes swelled his verse to unexpected and inevitable grandeur; but

his excellence of this kind is merely fortuitous: he sinks willingly down to his general carelessness, and avoids with very little care either meanness or asperity.

His contractions are often rugged and harsh:

One flings a mountain, and its rivers too
Torn up with 't.

His rhymes are very often made by pronouns or particles, or the like unimportant words, which disappoint the ear, and destroy the energy of the line.

His combination of different measures is sometimes dissonant and unpleasing; he joins verses together, of which the former does not slide easily into the latter.

The words *do* and *did*, which so much degrade in present estimation the line that admits them, were in the time of Cowley little censured or avoided: how often he used them, and with how bad an effect, at least to our ears, will appear by a passage, in which every reader will lament to

see just and noble thoughts defrauded of their praise by inelegance of language:

Where honour or where conscience *does* not blind,
No other law shall shackle me;
Slave to myself I ne'er will be;
Nor shall my future actions be confin'd
By my own present mind.
Who by resolves and vows engag'd *does* stand
For days, that yet belong to fate,
Does like an unthrift mortgage his estate,
Before it falls into his hand,
The bondman of the cloister so,
All that he *does* receive *does* always owe.
And still as Time comes in, it goes away,
Not to enjoy, but debts to pay;
Unhappy slave, and pupil to a bell!
Which his hour's work as well as hours *does* tell:
Unhappy till the last, the kind releasing knell.

His heroick lines are often formed of monosyllables; but yet they are sometimes sweet and sonorous.

He says of the Messiah,

Round the whole earth his dreaded name shall sound,
And reach to worlds that must not yet be found.

In another place, of David,

Yet bid him go securely, when he sends;
'T is Saul that is his foe, and we his friends.
The man who has his God, no aid can lack;
And we who bid him go, will bring him back.

Yet amidst his negligence he sometimes attempted an improved and scientific versification; of which it will be best to give his own account subjoined to this line,

Nor can the glory contain itself in th' endless space.

" I am sorry that it is necessary to admonish " the most part of readers, that it is not by " negligence that this verse is so loose, long, " and, as it were, vast; it is to paint in the " number the nature of the thing which it de- " scribes, which I would have observed in divers " other places of this poem, that else will pass " for very careless verses: as before,

And over-runs the neighb'ring fields with violent course.

" In the second book;

Down a precipice deep, down he casts them all,—

"—And,

And fell a-down his shoulders with loose care.

" In the third,

Brass was his helmet, his boots brass, and o'er
His breast a thick plate of strong brass he wore.

" In the fourth,

Like some fair pine o'er-looking all th' ignobler wood.

" And,

Some from the rocks cast themselves down headlong.

" And many more: but it is enough to instance " in a few. The thing is, that the disposition " of words and numbers should be such, as " that, out of the order and sound of them, the " things themselves may be represented. This " the Greeks were not so accurate as to bind " themselves to; neither have our English poets " observed it, for aught I can find. The Latins " *(qui musas colunt severiores)* sometimes did it; " and their prince, Virgil, always: in whom " the examples are innumerable, and taken no- " tice of by all judicious men, so that it is su- " perfluous to collect them."

I know not whether he has, in many of these instances, attained the representation or resemblance that he purposes. Verse can imitate only sound and motion. A *boundless* verse, a *headlong* verse, and a verse of *brass* or of *strong brass*, seem to comprise very incongruous and unsociable ideas. What there is peculiar in the sound of the line expressing *loose care*, I cannot discover; nor why the *pine* is *taller* in an Alexandrine than in ten syllables.

But, not to defraud him of his due praise, he has given one example of representative versification, which perhaps no other English line can equal:

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise:
He, who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay
Till the whole stream that stopp'd him shall be gone,
Which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on.

Cowley was, I believe, the first poet that mingled Alexandrines at pleasure with the common heroick of ten syllables, and from him

Dryden borrowed the practice, whether ornamental or licentious. He considered the verse of twelve syllables as elevated and majestick, and has therefore deviated into that measure when he supposes the voice heard of the Supreme Being.

The Author of the Davideis is commended by Dryden for having written it in couplets, because he discovered that any staff was too lyrical for an heroick poem; but this seems to have been known before by *May* and *Sandys*, the translators of the Pharsalia and the Metamorphoses.

In the Davideis are some hemistichs, or verses left imperfect by the author, in imitation of Virgil, whom he supposes not to have intended to complete them: that this opinion is erroneous, may be probably concluded, because this truncation is imitated by no subsequent Roman poet; because Virgil himself filled up one broken line in the heat of recitation; because in one the sense is now unfinished; and because all that can be done by a broken verse, a line inter-

sected by a *cæsura* and a full stop will equally effect.

Of triplets in his Davideis he makes no use, and perhaps did not at first think them allowable; but he appears afterwards to have changed his mind, for in the verses on the government of Cromwell he inserts them liberally with great happiness.

After so much criticism on his Poems, the Essays which accompany them must not be forgotten. What is said by Sprat of his conversation, that no man could draw from it any suspicion of his excellence in poetry, may be applied to these compositions. No author ever kept his verse and his prose at a greater distance from each other. His thoughts are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equability, which has never yet obtained its due commendation. Nothing is far-sought, or hard-laboured; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness.

It has been observed by Felton, in his Essay

on the Classicks, that Cowley was beloved by every Muse that he courted; and that he has rivalled the Ancients in every kind of poetry but tragedy.

It may be affirmed, without any encomiaſtick fervour, that he brought to his poetick labours a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gaiety of the less; that he was equally qualified for spritely sallies, and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and, instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that, if he left versification yet improvable, he left likewise from time to time such specimens of excellence as enabled succeeding poets to improve it.

REMARKS

BY

J. AIKIN, M.D.

DR. JOHNSON in his observations upon Cowley's poetry has put forth all his strength; and it would be difficult in the whole compass of critical writing to find an example of more acuteness and comprehension than he has displayed in his account of the *Metaphysical Poets*. The exact appropriation of the epithet (which he borrowed from Dryden) may, however, be called in question. Metaphysical notions exclusively belong to intellect, and stand in opposition to the images derived from sensible objects. But these writers, although they made great use of the abstract ideas and speculations of the schools —which was particularly the case with Donne, the most learned of the class—yet by no means rejected any object of similitude or illustration

that came in their way, whencesoever derived. The perpetual search after such objects was, indeed, their distinguishing characteristic, as Dr. Johnson has well observed; while he has at the same time fully remarked the baneful effect of this propensity in precluding every natural sentiment or image which their subjects might have suggested. In this enumeration of these poets, it seems extraordinary that the name of Milton should be inserted merely on account of his sportive lines upon Hobson. The catalogue might easily have been enlarged; and even Dryden might with justice have been included, since he was long under the dominion of a fondness for dazzling conceits and far-fetched imagery.

In his defence of Cowley from the charge brought against him by a rigid theologian, of having published "A book of profane and lasci-"vious verses," the critic appears to have been somewhat swayed by that spirit of contradiction which at times influenced his argumentation. For he himself has afterwards censured the poet for a "light allusion to sacred things, by which

" readers far short of sanctity are frequently " offended, and which would not be borne in " the present age." This, surely, is justifying the epithet *profane* in the sense in which that writer probably used it. It may be added, that if the amorous poems of Cowley are too subtle and ingenious to be inflammatory, they are by no means free from licentious ideas and expressions.

The sentence Dr. Johnson has pronounced concerning the unfitness of scripture subjects for poetical embellishment, on account of the awe and submissive reverence with which the sacred writings are perused, seems rather to be dictated by the spirit of scrupulous and mistaken piety, than by just and philosophical thinking. It evidently adopts for its principle the notion of the full and equal divine inspiration of every part of the writings composing the canon of scripture, whether historical, preceptive, or prophetic; —a notion which few men of learning and liberal inquiry can now be supposed to hold. That all curiosity respecting these topics is suppressed, because there is already what is " sufficient for

"the purposes of religion," is surely a very singular and narrow sentiment. Who would not rejoice at the recovery of some of those historical records which are expressly mentioned as containing at large, facts only given in abridgment by the extant Jewish writers? And what reader of the Bible, not destitute of common feeling, will concur in the critic's assertion, that the effect of the *theocratical* system is to prevent us from readily sympathising in the joys and griefs of those who lived under it? That mind must indeed be strangely impressed with the character of theocracy, which is rendered incapable of being interested by the *natural* circumstances in the adventures of Joseph or David. That the intermixture of poetical fiction in such narrations is a matter of much delicacy, will readily be acknowledged; since if the additions are not perfectly conformable to the original ground-work, they will prove offensive to those who are firm believers in the authenticity and importance of the scriptural records. But there seems no reason why the amplifications and ornaments usual in sober epick poetry should not be as admissible in a subject of Jewish history,

as in one of any other. Dr. Johnson was not, perhaps, aware at the time of writing, what a sweeping clause in critical legislation he was propounding, and how many fine works were involved in his condemnation. The particular merit of the "Davideis" is quite another consideration; and it appears to have been estimated by the critic with his usual perspicacity. Cowley's genius was, indeed, altogether unsuitable to the epick. His place is among the *ingenious poets*, and he may justly rank the first in his class.

ELEGIA DEDICATORIA,

AD

ILLUSTRISSIMAM ACADEMIAM

CANTABRIGIENSEM.

HOC tibi de nato, ditissima mater, egeno
Exiguum immensi pignus amoris habe.
Heu, meliora tibi depromere dona volentes
Astringit gratas parcior arca manus.
Túne tui poteris vocem hìc agnoscere nati
Tam malè formatam, dissimilemque tuæ?
Túne hìc materni vestigia sacra decoris,
Tu speculum poteris hìc reperire tuum?
Post longum, dices, Coulëi, sic mihi tempus?
Sic mihi speranti, perfide, multa redis?
Quæ, dices, Sagæ Lemurésque Deæque, nocentes,
Hunc mihi in infantis supposuêre loco?
At tu, sancta parens, crudelis tu quoque, nati
Ne tractes dextrâ vulnera cruda rudi.
Hei mihì, quid fato genetrix accedis iniquo?
Sit sors, sed non sis, ipsa, noverca mihi.

Si mihi natali Musarum adolescere in arvo,
Si benè dilecto luxuriare solo,
Si mihi de doctâ licuisset pleniùs undâ
Haurire, ingentem si satiare sitim,
Non ego degeneri dubitabilis ore redirem,
Nec legeres nomen fusa rubore meum.
Scis benè, scis quæ me tempestas publica mundi
Raptatrix vestro sustulit è gremio,
Nec pede adhuc firmo, nec firmo dente, negati
Poscentem querulo murmure lactis opem.
Sic quondam, aërium vento bellante per æquor,
Cum gravidum autumnum sæva flagellat hyems,
Immatura suâ velluntur ab arbore poma,
Et vi victa cadunt; arbor & ipsa gemit.
Nondum succus inest terræ generosus avitæ,
Nondum sol roseo redditur ore pater.
O mihi jucundum Grantæ super omnia nomen!
O penitùs toto corde receptus amor!
O pulchræ sine luxu ædes, vitæque beatæ,
Splendida paupertas, ingenuúsque, decor!
O chara ante alias, magnorum nomine regum
Digna domus! Trini nomine digna Dei!
O nimium Cereris cumulati munere campi,
Posthabitis Ennæ quos colit illa jugis!
O sacri fontes! & sacræ vatibus umbræ,
Quas recreant avium Pieridúmque chori!
O Camus! Phœbo nullus quo gratior amnis!
Amnibus auriferis invidiosus inops!

Ah mihi si vestræ reddat bona gaudia sedis,
  Detque Deus doctâ posse quiete frui!
Qualis eram, cum me tranquillâ mente sedentem
  Vidisti in ripâ, Came serene, tuâ;
Mulcentem audîsti puerili flumina cantu;
  Ille quidèm immerito, sed tibi gratus erat.
Nam, memini ripâ cum tu dignatus utrâque,
  Dignatum est totum verba referre nemus.
Tunc liquidis tacitisque simul mea vita diebus,
  Et similis vestræ candida fluxit aquæ.
At nunc cœnosæ luces, atque obice multo
  Rumpitur ætatis turbidus ordo meæ.
Quid mihi Sequanâ opus, Tamesisve aut Thybridis
    unda?
  Tu potis es nostram tollere, Came, sitim.
Felix, qui nunquam plus uno viderit amne!
  Quique eadem Salicis littora more colit!
Felix, qui non tentatus sordescere mundus,
  Et cui pauperies nota nitere potest!
Tempore cui nullo misera experientia constat,
  Ut res humanas sentiat esse nihil!
At nos exemplis fortuna instruxit opimis,
  Et documentorum satque supérque dedit.
Cum capite avulsum diadema, infractáque sceptra.
  Contusásque hominum sorte minante minas,
Parcarum ludos, & non tractabile fatum,
  Et versas fundo vidimus orbis opes.

Quis poterit fragilem post talia credere puppim
Infami scopulis naufragiisque mari?
Tu quoque in hoc terræ tremuisti, Academia, motu,
(Nec frustrà) atque ædes contremuêre tuæ:
Contremuêre ipsæ pacatæ Palladis arces;
Et timuit fulmen laurea sancta novum.
Ah quanquam iratum, pestem hanc avertere numen,
Nec saltem bellis ista licere, velit!
Nos, tua progenies, pereamus; & ecce, perimus!
In nos jus habeat: jus habet omne malum.
Tu stabilis brevium genus immortale nepotum
Fundes; nec tibi mors ipsa superstes erit:
Semper plena manens uteri de fonte perenni
Formósas mittes ad mare mortis aquas.
Sic Venus humanâ quondam, Dea saucia dextrâ,
(Namque solent ipsis bella nocere Deis)
Imploravit opem superûm, questúsque cievit,
Tinxit adorandus candida membra cruor.
Quid quereris? contemne breves secura dolores;
Nam tibi ferre necem vulnera nulla valent.

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO

HIS EDITION IN FOLIO, 1656.

AT my return lately into England *, I met by great accident (for such I account it to be, that any copy of it should be extant any where so long, unless at his house who printed it) a book intituled, "The Iron Age," and published under my name, during the time of my absence. I wondered very much how one who could be so foolish to write so ill verses, should yet be so wise to set them forth as another man's rather than his own; though perhaps he might have made a better choice, and not fathered the bastard upon such a person, whose stock of reputation is, I fear, little enough for maintenance of his own numerous legitimate offspring of that kind. It would have been much less injurious, if it had pleased the author to put forth some of my writings under his own name, rather than his own under

* In 1656.

mine: he had been in that a more pardonable plagiary, and had done less wrong by robbery, than he does by such a bounty; for nobody can be justified by the imputation even of another's merit; and our own coarse cloaths are like to become us better than those of another man, though never so rich: but these, to say the truth, were so beggarly, that I myself was ashamed to wear them. It was in vain for me, that I avoided censure by the concealment of my own writings, if my reputation could be thus executed *in effigie*; and impossible it is for any good name to be in safety, if the malice of witches have the power to consume and destroy it in an image of their own making. This indeed was so ill made, and so unlike, that I hope the charm took no effect. So that I esteem myself less prejudiced by it, than by that which has been done to me since, almost in the same kind; which is, the publication of some things of mine without my consent or knowledge, and those so mangled and imperfect, that I could neither with honour acknowledge, nor with honesty quite disavow them.

Of which sort, was a comedy called "The Guardian," printed in the year 1650; but made and acted before the Prince, in his passage through Cambridge towards York, at the beginning of the late unhappy war; or rather neither made or acted, but

rough-drawn only, and repeated; for the haste was so great, that it could neither be revised or perfected by the author, nor learned without book by the actors, nor set forth in any measure tolerably by the officers of the college. After the representation (which, I confess, was somewhat of the latest) I began to look it over, and changed it very much, striking out some whole parts, as that of the poet and the soldier; but I have lost the copy, and dare not think it deserves the pains to write it again, which makes me omit it in this publication, though there be some things in it which I am not ashamed of, taking the excuse of my age and small experience in human conversation when I made it. But, as it is, it is only the hasty first-sitting of a picture, and therefore like to resemble me accordingly.

From this which has happened to myself, I began to reflect on the fortune of almost all writers, and especially poets, whose works (commonly printed after their deaths) we find stuffed out, either with counterfeit pieces, like false money put in to fill up the bag, though it add nothing to the sum; or with such, which, though of their own coin, they would have called in themselves, for the baseness of the allay: whether this proceed from the indiscretion of their friends, who think a vast heap of stones or rubbish a better monument than a little tomb of marble;

or by the unworthy avarice of some stationers, who are content to diminish the value of the author, so they may increase the price of the book; and, like vintners, with sophisticate mixtures, spoil the whole vessel of wine, to make it yield more profit. This has been the case with Shakespeare, Fletcher, Jonson, and many others; part of whose poems I should take the boldness to prune and lop away, if the care of replanting them in print did belong to me: neither would I make any scruple to cut off from som the unnecessary young suckers, and from others the old withered branches; for a great wit is no more tied to live in a vast volume, than in a gigantic body; on the contrary, it is commonly more vigorous, the less space it animates. And, as Statius says of little Tydeus*,

"——Totos infusa per artus
"Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus."

I am not ignorant, that, by saying this of others, I expose myself to some raillery, for not using the same severe discretion in my own case, where it concerns me nearer: but though I publish here more than in strict wisdom I ought to have done, yet I have suppress and cast away more than I publish; and, for the ease of myself and others, have lost, I

* Stat. Theb. lib. i. 416.

believe too, more than both. And upon these considerations I have been persuaded to overcome all the just repugnances of my own modesty, and to produce these poems to the light and view of the world; not as a thing that I approved of in itself, but as a less evil, which I chose rather than to stay till it were done for me by somebody else, either surreptitiously before, or avowedly after, my death: and this will be the more excusable, when the reader shall know in what respects he may look upon me as a dead, or at least a dying person, and upon my Muse in this action, as appearing, like the emperor Charles the fifth, and assisting at her own funeral.

For, to make myself absolutely dead in a poetical capacity, my resolution at present is, never to exercise any more that faculty. It is, I confess, but seldom seen that the poet dies before the man; for, when we once fall in love with that bewitching art, we do not use to court it as a mistress, but marry it as a wife, and take it for better or worse, as an inseparable companion of our whole life. But, as the marriages of infants do but rarely prosper, so no man ought to wonder at the diminution or decay of my affection to poesy; to which I had contracted myself so much under age, and so much to my own preju-

dice in regard of those more profitable matches, which I might have made among the richer sciences. As for the portion which this brings of fame, it is an estate (if it be any, for men are not oftener deceived in their hopes of widows, than in their opinion of "Exegi monumentum ære perennius—") that hardly ever comes in whilst we are living to enjoy it, but is a fantastical kind of reversion to our own selves: neither ought any man to envy poets this posthumous and imaginary happiness, since they find commonly so little in present, that it may be truly applied to them, which St. Paul speaks of the first Christians, "If their reward be in this life, they are of all men "the most miserable."

And, if in quiet and flourishing times they meet with so small encouragement, what are they to expect in rough and troubled ones? If wit be such a plant, that it scarce receives heat enough to preserve it alive even in the summer of our cold climate, how can it choose but wither in a long and a sharp winter? A warlike, various, and a tragical age is best to write of, but worst to write in. And I may, though in a very unequal proportion, assume that to myself, which was spoken by Tully to a much better person, upon occasion of the civil wars and revolutions in his time: "Sed in te intuens, Brute, doleo: cujus in adolescen-

" iam, per medias laudes, quasi quadrigis vehentem,
" transversa incurrit misera fortuna reipublicæ *."

Neither is the present constitution of my mind more proper than that of the times for this exercise, or rather divertisement. There is nothing that requires so much serenity and cheerfulness of spirit; it must not be either overwhelmed with the cares of life, or overcast with the clouds of melancholy and sorrow, or shaken and disturbed by the storms of injurious fortune; it must, like the halcyon, have fair weather to breed in. The soul must be filled with bright and delightful ideas, when it undertakes to communicate delight to others; which is the main end of poesy. One may see through the style of Ovid de Trist. the humbled and dejected condition of spirit with which he wrote it; there scarce remains any footstep of that genius,

"—quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes†, &c.

The cold of the country had strucken through all his faculties, and benumbed the very feet of his verses. He is himself, methinks, like one of the stories of his own Metamorphosis; and, though there remain some weak resemblances of Ovid at Rome, it is but, as he says of Niobe‡,

* Cic. de Clar. Orator. § 331. † Metam. l. xv. 871.
‡ Metam. l. vi. 304.

" In vultu color est sine sanguine: lumina mœstis
" Stant immota genis: nihil est in imagine vivi.—
" Flet tamen—"

The truth is, for a man to write well, it is necessary to be in good humour; neither is wit less eclipsed with the unquietness of mind, than beauty with the indisposition of body. So that it is almost as hard a thing to be a poet in despite of fortune, as it is in despite of nature. For my own part, neither my obligations to the Muses, nor expectations from them, are so great, as that I should suffer myself on no considerations to be divorced, or that I should say like Horace*,

" Quisquis erit vitæ, scribam, color."

I shall rather use his words in another place†,

" Vixi Camenis nuper idoneus,
" Et militavi non sine gloriâ:
" Nunc arma, defunctúmque bello
" Barbiton hic paries habebit."

And this resolution of mine does the more befit me, because my desire has been for some years past (though

* Hor. 2 Sat. i. 60. † 3 Carm. Ode xxvi. " Vixi puellis," &c.

the execution has been accidentally diverted) and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts (which is the end of most men that travel thither; so that of these Indies it is truer than it was of the former,

" Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos,
" Per mare pauperiem fugiens—*)"

but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat (but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy)

" Oblitúsque meorum, obliviscendus & illis— †"

as my former author speaks too, who has enticed me here, I know not how, into the pedantry of this heap of Latin sentences. And I think Dr. Donne's *Sundyal in a grave* is not more useless and ridiculous, than poetry would be in that retirement. As this therefore is in a true sense a kind of death to the Muses, and a real literal quitting of this world; so, methinks, I may make a just claim to the undoubted privilege of deceased poets, which is, to be read with more favour than the living;

* Hor. 1 Ep. i. 45. † Hor. 1 Ep. xi. 9.

" Tanti est ut placeam tibi, perire *."

Having been forced, for my own necessary justification, to trouble the reader with this long discourse of the reasons why I trouble him also with all the rest of the book; I shall only add somewhat concerning the several parts of it, and some other pieces, which I have thought fit to reject in this publication: as, first, all those which I wrote at school, from the age of ten years, till after fifteen; for even so far backward there remain yet some traces of me in the little footsteps of a child; which, though they were then looked upon as commendable extravagancies in a boy (men setting a value upon any kind of fruit before the usual season of it), yet I would be loth to be bound now to read them all over myself; and therefore should do ill to expect that patience from others. Besides, they have already passed through several editions, which is a longer life than uses to be enjoyed by infants that are born before the ordinary terms. They had the good fortune then to find the world so indulgent (for, considering the time of their production, who could be so hard-hearted to be severe?) that I scarce yet apprehend so much to be censured for them, as for not having made advances afterwards proportionable to the speed of my setting out; and am obliged too in a manner by discretion to conceal and suppress them, as promises and instru-

* Martial, lib. viii. ep. 69.

ments under my own hand, whereby I stood engaged for more than I have been able to perform; in which truly if I have failed, I have the real excuse of the honestest sort of bankrupts, which is, to have been made unsolvable not so much by their own negligence and ill-husbandry, as by some notorious accidents and public disasters. In the next place, I have cast away all such pieces as I wrote during the time of the late troubles, with any relation to the differences that caused them; as, among others, three books of the civil war itself, reaching as far as the first battle of Newbury, where the succeeding misfortunes of the party stopped the work.

As for the ensuing book, it consists of four parts. The first is a Miscellany of several subjects, and some of them made when I was very young, which it is perhaps superfluous to tell the reader: I know not by what chance I have kept copies of them; for they are but a very few in comparison of those which I have lost; and I think they have no extraordinary virtue in them, to deserve more care in preservation than was bestowed upon their brethren; for which I am so little concerned, that I am ashamed of the arrogancy of the word, when I said I had lost them.

The second is called "The Mistress," or "Love-"Verses;" for so it is, that poets are scarce thought

freemen of their company, without paying some duties, and obliging themselves to be true to love. Sooner or later they must all pass through that trial, like some Mahometan monks, that are bound by their order, once at least in their life, to make a pilgrimage to Mecca:

"In furias ignemque ruunt: amor omnibus idem *."

But we must not always make a judgment of their manners from their writings of this kind; as the Romanists uncharitably do of Beza, for a few lascivious sonnets composed by him in his youth. It is not in this sense that poesy is said to be a kind of painting; it is not the picture of the poet, but of things and persons imagined by him. He may be in his own practice and disposition a philosopher, nay a Stoic, and yet speak sometimes with the softness of an amorous Sappho,

"——ferat & rubus asper amomum †."

He professes too much the use of fables (though without the malice of deceiving) to have his testimony taken even against himself. Neither would I here be misunderstood, as if I affected so much gravity as to

* Virg. Georg. iii. 244. † Virg. Ecl. iii. 89.

be ashamed to be thought really in love. On the contrary, I cannot have a good opinion of any man, who is not at least capable of being so. But I speak it to excuse some expressions (if such there be) which may happen to offend the severity of supercilious readers: for much excess is to be allowed in love, and even more in poetry; so we avoid the two unpardonable vices in both, which are obscenity and profaneness, of which, I am sure, if my words be ever guilty, they have ill represented my thoughts and intentions. And if, notwithstanding all this, the lightness of the matter here displease any body, he may find wherewithal to content his more serious inclinations in the weight and height of the ensuing arguments.

For, as for the "Pindarick Odes," (which is the third part,) I am in great doubt whether they will be understood by most readers; nay, even by very many who are well enough acquainted with the common roads and ordinary tracks of poesy. They either are, or at least were meant to be, of that kind of style which Dion. Halicarnasseus calls Μεγαλοφυὲς καὶ ἡδὺ μετὰ δεινότητος, and which he attributes to Alcæus. The digressions are many, and sudden, and sometimes long, according to the fashion of all lyriques, and of Pindar above all men living: the figures are unusual and bold, even to temerity, and such as I durst not have to do withal in any other kind of poetry: the

numbers are various and irregular, and sometimes (especially some of the long ones) seem harsh and uncouth, if the just measures and cadences be not observed in the pronunciation. So that almost all their sweetness and numerosity (which is to be found, if I mistake not, in the roughest, if rightly repeated) lies in a manner wholly at the mercy of the reader. I have briefly described the nature of these verses, in the Ode intituled "The Resurrection:" and though the liberty of them may incline a man to believe them easy to be composed, yet the undertaker will find it otherwise—

"—Ut sibi quivis
"Speret idem; sudet multùm, frustráque laboret
"Ausus idem*."

I come now to the last part, which is "Davideis," or an heroical poem of the troubles of David: which I designed into twelve books; not for the tribes' sake, but after the pattern of our master Virgil; and intended to close all with that most poetical and excellent elegy of David on the death of Saul and Jonathan: for I had no mind to carry him quite on to his anointing at Hebron, because it is the custom of heroic poets (as we see by the examples of Homer and Virgil, whom we should do ill to forsake to imitate others)

* Hor. Ars. Poet. 240.

never to come to the full end of their story: but only so near, that every one may see it; as men commonly play not out the game, when it is evident that they can win it, but lay down their cards, and take up what they have won. This, I say, was the whole design: in which there are many noble and fertile arguments behind; as the barbarous cruelty of Saul to the priests at Nob; the several flights and escapes of David, with the manner of his living in the Wilderness; the funeral of Samuel; the love of Abigail; the sacking of Ziglag; the loss and recovery of David's wives from the Amalekites; the witch of Endor; the war with the Philistines; and the battle of Gilboa: all which I meant to interweave, upon several occasions, with most of the illustrious stories of the Old Testament, and to embellish with the most remarkable antiquities of the Jews, and of other nations before or at that age.

But I have had neither leisure hitherto, nor have appetite at present, to finish the work, or so much as to revise that part which is done, with that care which I resolved to bestow upon it, and which the dignity of the matter well deserves. For what worthier subject could have been chosen, among all the treasuries of past times, than the life of this young prince; who, from so small beginnings, through such infinite troubles and oppositions, by such miraculous virtues and ex-

cellencies, and with such incomparable variety of wonderful actions and accidents, became the greatest monarch that ever sat on the most famous throne of the whole earth? Whom should a poet more justly seek to honour, than the highest person who ever honoured his profession? whom a Christian poet, rather than the man after God's own heart, and the man who had that sacred pre-eminence above all other princes, to be the best and mightiest of that royal race from whence Christ himself, according to the flesh, disdained not to descend?

When I consider this, and how many other bright and magnificent subjects of the like nature the holy Scripture affords and proffers, as it were, to poesy; in the wise managing and illustrating whereof the glory of God Almighty might be joined with the singular utility and noblest delight of mankind; it is not without grief and indignation that I behold that divine science employing all her inexhaustible riches of wit and eloquence, either in the wicked and beggarly flattery of great persons, or the unmanly idolizing of foolish women, or the wretched affectation of scurril laughter, or at best on the confused antiquated dreams of senseless fables and metamorphoses. Amongst all holy and consecrated things, which the devil ever stole and alienated from the service of the Deity; as altars, temples, sacrifices, prayers, and the like; there is none

that he so universally, and so long, usurped, as poetry. It is time to recover it out of the tyrant's hands, and to restore it to the kingdom of God, who is the father of it. It is time to baptize it in Jordan, for it will never become clean by bathing in the water of Damascus. There wants, methinks, but the conversion of that, and the Jews, for the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ. And as men, before their receiving of the faith, do not without some carnal reluctancies apprehend the bonds and fetters of it, but find it afterwards to be the truest and greatest liberty: it will fare no otherwise with this art, after the regeneration of it; it will meet with wonderful variety of new, more beautiful, and more delightful objects; neither will it want room, by being confined to heaven.

There is not so great a lye to be found in any poet, as the vulgar conceit of men, that lying is essential to good poetry. Were there never so wholesome nourishment to be had (but, alas! it breeds nothing but diseases) out of these boasted feasts of love and fables; yet, methinks, the unalterable continuance of the diet should make us nauseate it: for it is almost impossible to serve up any new dish of that kind. They are all but the cold-meats of the ancients, new-heated, and new set forth. I do not at all wonder that the old poets made some rich crops out of these grounds; the heart of the soil was not then wrought out with con-

tinual tillage: but what can we expect now, who come a-gleaning, not after the first reapers, but after the very beggars? Besides, though those mad stories of the gods and heroes seem in themselves so ridiculous; yet they were then the whole body (or rather chaos) of the theology of those times. They were believed by all, but a few philosophers, and perhaps some atheists; and served to good purpose among the vulgar (as pitiful things as they are), in strengthening the authority of law with the terrors of conscience, and expectation of certain rewards and unavoidable punishments. There was no other religion; and therefore that was better than none at all. But to us, who have no need of them; to us, who deride their folly, and are wearied with their impertinencies; they ought to appear no better arguments for verse, than those of their worthy successors, the knights-errant. What can we imagine more proper for the ornaments of wit or learning in the story of Deucalion than in that of Noah? Why will not the actions of Sampson afford as plentiful matter as the labours of Hercules? Why is not Jephtha's daughter as good a woman as Iphigenia? and the friendship of David and Jonathan more worthy celebration than that of Theseus and Pirithous? Does not the passage of Moses and the Israelites into the Holy Land yield incomparably more poetical variety than the voyages of Ulysses or Æneas? Are the obsolete thread-bare tales of Thebes and Troy half

so stored with great, heroical, and supernatural actions (since verse will needs find or make such), as the wars of Joshua, of the Judges, of David, and divers others? Can all the transformations of the gods give such copious hints to flourish and expatiate on, as the true miracles of Christ, or of his prophets and apostles? What do I instance in these few particulars? All the books of the Bible are either already most admirable and exalted pieces of poesy, or are the best materials in the world for it.

Yet, though they be in themselves so proper to be made use of for this purpose; none but a good artist will know how to do it: neither must we think to cut and polish diamonds with so little pains and skill as we do marble. For, if any man design to compose a sacred poem, by only turning a story of the Scripture, like Mr. Quarles's, or some other godly matter, like Mr. Heywood of angels, into rhyme; he is so far from elevating of poesy, that he only abases divinity. In brief, he who can write a profane poem well, may write a divine one better; but he who can do that but ill, will do this much worse. The same fertility of invention; the same wisdom of disposition; the same judgment in observance of decencies; the same lustre and vigour of elocution; the same modesty and majesty of number; briefly, the same kind of habit, is required to both: only this latter allows better stuff;

and therefore would look more deformedly, ill drest in it. I am far from assuming to myself to have fulfilled the duty of this weighty undertaking; but sure I am, there is nothing yet in our language (nor perhaps in any) that is in any degree answerable to the idea that I conceive of it. And I shall be ambitious of no other fruit from this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and industry of some other persons, who may be better able to perform it thoroughly and successfully.

MISCELLANIES.

THE MOTTO.

" Tentanda via est, &c."

WHAT shall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come my own?
I shall, like beasts or common people, die,
Unless you write my elegy;
Whilst others great, by being born, are grown;
Their mothers' labour, not their own.
In this scale gold, in th' other fame does lie,
The weight of that mounts this so high.
These men are Fortune's jewels, moulded bright;
Brought forth with their own fire and light:
If I, her vulgar stone, for either look,
Out of myself it must be strook.
Yet I must on; What sound is't strikes mine ear?
Sure I Fame's trumpet hear:
It sounds like the last trumpet; for it can
Raise up the buried man.
Unpast Alps stop me; but I'll cut them all,
And march, the Muses' Hannibal.
Hence, all the flattering vanities that lay
Nets of roses in the way!
Hence, the desire of honours or estate,
And all that is not above Fate!
Hence, Love himself, that tyrant of my days!
Which intercepts my coming praise.

Come, my best friends, my books! and lead me on;
'T is time that I were gone.
Welcome, great Stagyrite! and teach me now
All I was born to know:
Thy scholar's victories thou dost far out-do;
He conquer'd th'earth, the whole world you.
Welcome, learn'd Cicero! whose blest tongue and wit
Preserves Rome's greatness yet:
Thou art the first of Orators; only he
Who best can praise thee, next must be.
Welcome the Mantuan swan, Virgil the wise!
Whose verse walks highest, but not flies;
Who brought green Poesy to her perfect age,
And made that Art which was a Rage.
Tell me, ye mighty Three! what shall I do
To be like one of you?
But you have climb'd the mountain's top, there sit
On the calm flourishing head of it,
And, whilst with wearied steps we upward go,
See us, and clouds, below.

ODE.

OF WIT.

TELL me, O tell, what kind of thing is Wit,
Thou who master art of it?
For the first matter loves variety less;
Less women love't, either in love or dress.

A thousand different shapes it bears,
Comely in thousand shapes appears.
Yonder we saw it plain; and here 't is now,
Like spirits, in a place we know not how.

X

London, that vents of false ware so much store,
In no ware deceives us more;
For men, led by the colour and the shape,
Like Zeuxis' birds, fly to the painted grape.
Some things do through our judgment pass
As through a multiplying-glass;
And sometimes, if the object be too far,
We take a falling meteor for a star.

Hence 't is a Wit, that greatest word of fame,
Grows such a common name;
And Wits by our creation they become,
Just so as titular bishops made at Rome.
'T is not a tale, 't is not a jest
Admir'd with laughter at a feast,
Nor florid talk, which can that title gain;
The proofs of Wit for ever must remain.

'T is not to force some lifeless verses meet
With their five gouty feet.
All, every-where, like man's, must be the soul,
And Reason the inferior powers control.
Such were the numbers which could call
The stones into the Theban wall.
Such miracles are ceas'd; and now we see
No towns or houses rais'd by poetry.

Yet 't is not to adorn and gild each part;
That shows more cost than art.
Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
Rather than all things Wit, let none be there.
Several lights will not be seen,
If there be nothing else between.
Men doubt, because they stand so thick i' th' sky,
If those be stars which paint the Galaxy.

'Tis not when two like words make up one noise
(Jests for Dutch men and English boys);
In which who finds out Wit, the same may see
In an'grams and acrostick poetry:
Much less can that have any place
At which a virgin hides her face;
Such dross the fire must purge away: 't is just
The author blush there, where the reader must.

'Tis not such lines as almost crack the stage
When Bajazet begins to rage;
Nor a tall metaphor in the bombast way;
Nor the dry chips of short-lung'd Seneca;
Nor upon all things to obtrude
And force some odd similitude.
What is it then, which, like the Power Divine,
We only can by negatives define?

In a true piece of Wit all things must be,
Yet all things there agree;
As in the ark, join'd without force or strife,
All creatures dwelt; all creatures that had life:

Or, as the primitive forms of all
(If we compare great things with small)
Which, without discord or confusion, lie
In that strange mirror of the Deity.

But Love, that moulds one man up out of two,
Makes me forget, and injure you:
I took you for myself, sure, when I thought
That you in any thing were to be taught.
Correct my error with thy pen;
And, if any ask me then
What thing right Wit and height of Genius is,
I 'll only shew your lines, and say, 'T is this.

TO THE LORD FALKLAND,

FOR HIS SAFE RETURN FROM THE NORTHERN EXPEDITION AGAINST THE SCOTS.

GREAT is thy charge, O North! be wise and just,
England commits her Falkland to thy trust;
Return him safe; Learning would rather choose
Her Bodley or her Vatican to lose:
All things that are but writ or printed there,
In his unbounded breast engraven are.
There all the sciences together meet,
And every art does all her kindred greet,

Yet justle not, nor quarrel; but as well
Agree as in some common principle.
So, in an army govern'd right, we see,
(Though out of several countries rais'd it be)
That all their order and their place maintain,
The English, Dutch, the Frenchman, and the Dane:
So thousand divers species fill the air,
Yet neither crowd nor mix confus'dly there;
Beasts, houses, trees, and men, together lie,
Yet enter undisturb'd into the eye.

And this great prince of knowledge is by Fate
Thrust into th'noise and business of a state.
All virtues, and some customs of the court,
Other men's labour, are at least his sport;
Whilst we, who can no action undertake,
Whom idleness itself might learned make;
Who hear of nothing, and as yet scarce know,
Whether the Scots in England be or no;
Pace dully on, oft tire, and often stay,
Yet see his nimble Pegasus fly away.
'T is Nature's fault, who did thus partial grow,
And her estate of wit on one bestow;
Whilst we, like younger brothers, get at best
But a small stock, and must work out the rest.
How could he answer't, should the state think fit
To question a monopoly of wit?

Such is the man whom we require the same
We lent the North; untouch'd, as is his fame.
He is too good for war, and ought to be
As far from danger, as from fear he's free.

Those men alone (and those are useful too)
Whose valour is the only art they know,
Were for sad war and bloody battles born;
Let them the state defend, and he adorn.

ON THE DEATH OF

SIR HENRY WOOTTON.

WHAT shall we say, since silent now is he
Who when he spoke, all things would silent be?
Who had so many languages in store,
That only fame shall speak of him in more;
Whom England now no more return'd must see;
He's gone to heaven on his fourth embassy.
On earth he travell'd often; not to say
H' had been abroad, or pass loose time away.
In whatsoever land he chanc'd to come,
He read the men and manners, bringing home
Their wisdom, learning, and their piety,
As if he went to conquer, not to see.
So well he understood the most and best
Of tongues, that Babel sent into the West;
Spoke them so truly, that he had (you'd swear)
Not only liv'd, but been born every-where.
Justly each nation's speech to him was known,
Who for the world was made, not us alone;
Nor ought the language of that man be less,
Who in his breast had all things to express,

We say that learning's endless, and blame Fate
For not allowing life a longer date:
He did the utmost bounds of knowledge find,
He found them not so large as was his mind;
But, like the brave Pellæan youth, did moan
Because that art had no more worlds than one;
And, when he saw that he through all had past,
He dy'd, lest he should idle grow at last.

ON THE DEATH OF

MR. JORDAN,

SECOND MASTER AT WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.

HENCE, and make room for me, all you who come
Only to read the epitaph on this tomb!
Here lies the master of my tender years,
The guardian of my parents' hope and fears;
Whose government ne'er stood me in a tear;
All weeping was reserv'd to spend it here.
Come hither, all who his rare virtues knew,
And mourn with me: he was your tutor too.
Let's join our sighs, till they fly far, and shew
His native Belgia what she's now to do.
The league of grief bids her with us lament;
By her he was brought forth, and hither sent
In payment of all men we there had lost,
And all the English blood those wars have cost.

Wisely did Nature this learn'd man divide;
His birth was theirs, his death the mournful pride
Of England; and, t'avoid the envious strife
Of other lands, all Europe had his life,
But we in chief; our country soon was grown
A debtor more to him, than he to's own.
He pluckt from youth the follies and the crimes,
And built up men against the future times;
For deeds of age are in their causes then,
And though he taught but boys, he made the men.
Hence 't was a master, in those ancient days
When men sought knowledge first, and by it praise,
Was a thing full of reverence, profit, fame;
Father itself was but a second name.
He scorn'd the profit; his instructions all
Were, like the science, free and liberal.
He deserv'd honours, but despis'd them too,
As much as those who have them others do.
He knew not that which compliment they call;
Could flatter none, but himself least of all.
So true, so faithful, and so just, as he
Was nought on earth but his own memory;
His memory, where all things written were,
As sure and fixt as in Fate's books they are.
Thus he in arts so vast a treasure gain'd,
Whilst still the use came in, and stock remain'd:
And, having purchas'd all that man can know,
He labour'd with't to enrich others now;
Did thus a new and harder task sustain,
Like those that work in mines for others' gain:

He, though more nobly, had much more to do,
To search the vein, dig, purge, and mint it too,
Though my excuse would be, I must confess,
Much better had his diligence been less;
But, if a Muse hereafter smile on me,
And say, "Be thou a poet!" men shall see
That none could a more grateful scholar have;
For what I ow'd his life I 'll pay his grave.

ON

HIS MAJESTY'S RETURN OUT OF SCOTLAND.

WELCOME, great Sir! with all the joy that 's due
To the return of peace and you;
Two greatest blessings which this age can know!
For that to Thee, for thee to Heaven we owe.
Others by war their conquests gain,
You like a God your ends obtain;
Who, when rude Chaos for his help did call,
Spoke but the word, and sweetly order'd all.

This happy concord in no blood is writ,
None can grudge Heaven full thanks for it:
No mothers here lament their children's fate,
And like the peace, but think it comes too late.
No widows hear the jocund bells,
And take them for their husbands' knells:

No drop of blood is spilt, which might be said
To mark our joyful holiday with red.

'T was only Heaven could work this wondrous thing,
And only work't by such a king.
Again the northern hinds may sing and plough,
And fear no harm but from the weather now;
Again may tradesmen love their pain,
By knowing now for whom they gain;
The armour now may be hung up to sight,
And only in their halls the children fright.

The gain of civil wars will not allow
Bay to the conqueror's brow:
At such a game what fool would venture in,
Where one must lose, yet neither side can win?
How justly would our neighbours smile
At these mad quarrels of our isle;
Swell'd with proud hopes to snatch the whole away,
Whilst we bett all, and yet for nothing play!

How was the silver Tine frighted before,
And durst not kiss the armed shore!
His waters ran more swiftly than they use,
And hasted to the sea to tell the news:
The sea itself, how rough soe'er,
Could scarce believe such fury here.
How could the Scots and we be enemies grown?
That, and its master Charles, had made us one.

No blood so loud as that of civil war:
It calls for dangers from afar.
Let 's rather go and seek out them and fame;
Thus our fore-fathers got, thus left, a name:
All their rich blood was spent with gains,
But that which swells their children's veins.
Why sit we still, our spirits wrapt in lead?
Not like them whilst they liv'd, but now they 're dead.

The noise at home was but Fate's policy,
To raise our spirits more high:
So a bold lion, ere he seeks his prey,
Lashes his sides and roars, and then away.
How would the German Eagle fear
To see a new Gustavus there!
How would it shake, though as't was wont to do
For Jove of old, it now bore thunder too!

Sure there are actions of this height and praise
Destin'd to Charles's days!
What will the triumphs of his battles be,
Whose very peace itself is victory!
When Heaven bestows the best of kings,
It bids us think of mighty things:
His valour, wisdom, offspring, speak no less;
And we, the prophets' sons, write not by guess.

ON THE DEATH OF

SIR ANTHONY VANDYKE,

THE FAMOUS PAINTER.

VANDYKE is dead; but what bold Muse shall dare
(Though poets in that word with painters share)
T' express her sadness? Poesy must become
An art like Painting here, an art that 's dumb.
Let 's all our solemn grief in silence keep,
Like some sad picture which he made to weep,
Or those who saw 't; for none his works could view
Unmov'd with the same passions which he drew.
His pieces so with their live objects strive,
That both or pictures seem, or both alive.
Nature herself, amaz'd, does doubting stand,
Which is her own and which the painter's hand;
And does attempt the like with less success,
When her own work in twins she would express.
His all-resembling pencil did out-pass
The mimic imagery of looking-glass.
Nor was his life less perfect than his art,
Nor was his hand less erring than his heart.
There was no false or fading colour there,
The figures sweet and well-proportion'd were.
Most other men, set next to him in view,
Appear'd more shadows than the men he drew.

Thus still he liv'd, till Heav'n did for him call;
Where reverend Luke salutes him first of all;
Where he beholds new sights, divinely fair,
And could almost wish for his pencil there;
Did he not gladly see how all things shine,
Wondrously painted in the Mind Divine,
Whilst he, for ever ravish'd with the show,
Scorns his own art, which we admire below.
Only his beauteous lady still he loves
(The love of heavenly objects Heaven improves);
He sees bright angels in pure beams appear,
And thinks on her he left so like them here.
And you, fair widow! who stay here alive,
Since he so much rejoices, cease to grieve:
Your joys and griefs were wont the same to be;
Begin not now, blest pair! to disagree.
No wonder death mov'd not his generous mind;
You, and a new-born You, he left behind:
Ev'n Fate express'd his love to his dear wife,
And let him end your picture with his life.

PROMETHEUS ILL-PAINTED.

HOW wretched does Prometheus' state appear,
Whilst he his second misery suffers here!
Draw him no more; lest, as he tortur'd stands,
He blame great Jove's less than the painter's hands.

It would the Vulture's cruelty outgo,
If once again his liver thus should grow.
Pity him, Jove! and his bold theft allow;
The flames he once stole from thee grant him now!

ODE.

HERE 's to thee, Dick; this whining love despise;
Pledge me, my friend; and drink till thou be'st wise.
It sparkles brighter far than she:
'T is pure and right, without deceit;
And such no woman ere will be:
No; they are all sophisticate.

With all thy servile pains what canst thou win,
But an ill-favour'd and uncleanly sin?
A thing so vile, and so short-liv'd,
That Venus' joys, as well as she,
With reason may be said to be
From the neglected foam deriv'd.

Whom would that painted toy a beauty move;
Whom would it e'er persuade to court and love;
Could he a woman's heart have seen
(But, oh! no light does thither come),
And view'd her perfectly within,
When he lay shut up in her womb?

Follies they have so numberless in store,
That only he who loves them can have more.
Neither their sighs nor tears are true;
Those idly blow, these idly fall,
Nothing like to ours at all:
But sighs and tears have sexes too.

Here's to thee again; thy senseless sorrows drown;
Let the glass walk, till all things too go round!
Again, till these two lights be four;
No error here can dangerous prove:
Thy passion, man, deceiv'd thee more;
None double see like men in love.

FRIENDSHIP IN ABSENCE.

WHEN chance or cruel business parts us two,
What do our souls, I wonder, do?
Whilst sleep does our dull bodies tie,
Methinks at home they should not stay,
Content with dreams, but boldly fly
Abroad, and meet each other half the way.

Sure they do meet, enjoy each other there,
And mix, I know not how nor where!
Their friendly lights together twine,
Though we perceive't not to be so!
Like loving stars, which oft combine,
Yet not themselves their own conjunctions know.

'T were an ill world, I 'll swear, for every friend,
If distance could their union end:
But Love itself does far advance
Above the power of time and space;
It scorns such outward circumstance,
His time 's for ever, every-where his place.

I 'm there with thee, yet here with me thou art,
Lodg'd in each other's heart:
Miracles cease not yet in love.
When he his mighty power will try,
Absence itself does bounteous prove,
And strangely ev'n our presence multiply.

Pure is the flame of Friendship, and divine,
Like that which in Heaven's sun does shine:
He in the upper air and sky
Does no effects of heat bestow;
But, as his beams the farther fly,
He begets warmth, life, beauty, here below.

Friendship is less apparent when too nigh,
Like objects if they touch the eye.
Less meritorious then is love;
For when we friends together see
So much, so much both one do prove,
That their love then seems but self-love to be.

Each day think on me, and each day I shall
For thee make hours canonical.

By every wind that comes this way,
Send me, at least, a sigh or two;
Such and so many I'll repay,
As shall themselves make winds to get to you.

A thousand pretty ways we'll think upon,
To mock our separation.
Alas! ten thousand will not do:
My heart will thus no longer stay;
No longer 't will be kept from you,
But knocks against the breast to get away.
And, when no art affords me help or ease,
I seek with verse my griefs t' appease;
Just as a bird, that flies about
And beats itself against the cage,
Finding at last no passage out,
It sits and sings, and so o'ercomes its rage.

TO

THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

UPON HIS ENLARGEMENT OUT OF THE TOWER.

PARDON, my lord, that I am come so late
T' express my joy for your return of fate!
So, when injurious Chance did you deprive
Of liberty, at first I could not grieve;

My thoughts awhile, like you, imprison'd lay;
Great joys, as well as sorrows, make a stay;
They hinder one another in the crowd,
And none are heard, whilst all would speak aloud.
Should every man's officious gladness haste,
And be afraid to shew itself the last,
The throng of gratulations now would be
Another loss to you of liberty.
When of your freedom men the news did hear,
Where it was wish'd-for, that is every-where,
'T was like the speech which from your lips does fall;
As soon as it was heard, it ravish'd all.
So eloquent Tully did from exile come;
Thus long'd-for he return'd, and cherish'd Rome;
Which could no more his tongue and counsels miss;
Rome, the world's head, was nothing without his.
Wrong to those sacred ashes I should do,
Should I compare any to him but you;
You, to whom Art and Nature did dispense
The consulship of wit and eloquence.
Nor did your fate differ from his at all,
Because the doom of exile was his fall;
For the whole world, without a native home,
Is nothing but a prison of larger room.
But like a melting woman suffer'd he,
He who before out-did humanity;
Nor could his spirit constant and stedfast prove,
Whose art 't had been, and greatest end, to move.
You put ill-fortune in so good a dress,
That it out-shone other men's happiness:

Had your prosperity always clearly gone,
As your high merits would have led it on,
You 'ad half been lost, and an example then
But for the happy—the least part of men.
Your very sufferings did so graceful shew,
That some strait envy'd your affliction too;
For a clear conscience and heroic mind
In ills their business and their glory find.
So, though less worthy stones are drown'd in night,
The faithful diamond keeps his native light,
And is oblig'd to darkness for a ray,
That would be more oppress'd than help'd by day.
Your soul then most shew'd her unconquer'd power,
Was stronger and more armed than the Tower.
Sure unkind Fate will tempt your spirit no more;
Sh' has try'd her weakness and your strength before.
T' oppose him still, who once has conquer'd so,
Were now to be your rebel, not your foe;
Fortune henceforth will more of providence have,
And rather be your friend than be your slave.

TO A LADY

WHO MADE POSIES FOR RINGS.

I LITTLE thought the time would ever be,
That I should wit in dwarfish posies see.
As all words in few letters live,
Thou to few words all sense dost give.

'T was Nature taught you this rare art,
In such a little much to shew;
Who, all the good she did impart
To womankind, epitomiz'd in you.

If, as the ancients did not doubt to sing,
The turning years be well compar'd to' a ring,
We'll write whate'er from you we hear;
For that 's the posy of the year.
This difference only will remain—
That Time his former face does shew,
Winding into himself again;
But your unweary'd wit is always new.

'T is said that conjurers have an art found out
To carry spirits confin'd in rings about:
The wonder now will less appear,
When we behold your magic here.
You, by your rings, do prisoners take,
And chain them with your mystic spells,
And, the strong witchcraft full to make,
Love, the great devil, charm'd to those circles, dwells.

They who above do various circles find,
Say, like a ring th' Equator heaven does bind.
When heaven shall be adorn'd by thee
(Which then more Heaven than 't is will be),
'T is thou must write the posy there;
For it wanteth one as yet,
Though the sun pass through 't twice a year;
The sun, who is esteem'd the god of wit,

Happy the hands which wear thy sacred rings,
They 'll teach those hands to write mysterious things.
Let other rings, with jewels bright,
Cast around their costly light;
Let them want no noble stone,
By nature rich and art refin'd;
Yet shall thy rings give place to none,
But only that which must thy marriage bind.

PROLOGUE TO THE GUARDIAN:

BEFORE THE PRINCE.

WHO says the times do learning disallow?
'T is false; 't was never honour'd so as now.
When you appear, great Prince! our night is done;
You are our morning-star, and shall be' our sun.
But our scene 's London now; and by the rout
We perish, if the Round-heads be about:
For now no ornament the head must wear,
No bays, no mitre, not so much as hair.
How can a play pass safely, when ye know
Cheapside-cross falls for making but a show?
Our only hope is this, that it may be
A play may pass too, made extempore.
Though other arts poor and neglected grow,
They 'll admit Poesy, which was always so.
But we contemn the fury of these days,
And scorn no less their censure than their praise:

Our Muse, blest Prince! does only' on you rely;
Would gladly live, but not refuse to die.
Accept our hasty zeal! a thing that's play'd
Ere 't is a play, and acted ere 't is made.
Our ignorance, but our duty too, we show;
I would all ignorant people would do so!
At other times expect our wit or art;
This comedy is acted by the heart.

THE EPILOGUE.

THE play, great Sir! is done; yet needs must fear,
Though you brought all your father's mercies here,
It may offend your Highness; and we 'ave now
Three hours done treason here, for aught we know.
But power your grace can above Nature give,
It can give power to make abortives live;
In which, if our bold wishes should be crost,
'T is but the life of one poor week 't has lost:
Though it should fall beneath your mortal scorn,
Scarce could it die more quickly than 't was born.

ON THE DEATH OF

MR. WILLIAM HERVEY.

" Immodicis brevis est ætas, & rara senectus." MART.

IT was a dismal and a fearful night, [light,
Scarce could the morn drive on th' unwilling
When sleep, death's image, left my troubled breast,
By something liker death possest.
My eyes with tears did uncommanded flow,
And on my soul hung the dull weight
Of some intolerable fate.
What bell was that? ah me! too much I know.

My sweet companion, and my gentle peer,
Why hast thou left me thus unkindly here,
Thy end for ever, and my life, to moan?
O, thou hast left me all alone!
Thy soul and body, when Death's agony
Besieg'd around thy noble heart,
Did not with more reluctance part,
Than I, my dearest friend! do part from thee.

My dearest friend, would I had dy'd for thee!
Life and this world henceforth will tedious be.
Nor shall I know hereafter what to do,
If once my griefs prove tedious too.

Silent and sad I walk about all day,
As sullen ghosts stalk speechless by
Where their hid treasures lie;
Alas! my treasure's gone! why do I stay?

He was my friend, the truest friend on earth;
A strong and mighty influence join'd our birth;
Nor did we envy the most sounding name
By friendship given of old to fame.
None but his brethren he and sisters knew,
Whom the kind youth preferr'd to me;
And ev'n in that we did agree,
For much above myself I lov'd them too.

Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights,
How oft unweary'd have we spent the nights,
Till the Ledæan stars, so fam'd for love,
Wonder'd at us from above!
We spent them not in toys, in lusts, or wine;
But search of deep Philosophy,
Wit, Eloquence, and Poetry,
Arts which I lov'd, for they, my friend, were thine.

Ye fields of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, say
Have ye not seen us walking every day?
Was there a tree about which did not know
The love betwixt us two?
Henceforth, ye gentle trees, for ever fade;
Or your sad branches thicker join,
And into darkesome shades combine,
Dark as the grave wherein my friend is laid!

Henceforth, no learned youths beneath you sing,
Till all the tuneful birds to' your boughs they bring;
No tuneful birds play with their wonted chear,
And call the learned youths to hear;
No whistling winds through the glad branches fly:
But all, with sad solemnity,
Mute and unmoved be,
Mute as the grave wherein my friend does lie.

To him my Muse made haste with every strain,
Whilst it was new and warm yet from the brain:
He lov'd my worthless rhymes, and, like a friend,
Would find out something to commend.
Hence now, my Muse! thou canst not me delight:
Be this my latest verse,
With which I now adorn his hearse;
And this my grief, without thy help, shall write.

Had I a wreath of bays about my brow,
I should contemn that flourishing honour now;
Condemn it to the fire, and joy to hear
It rage and crackle there.
Instead of bays, crown with sad cypress me;
Cypress, which tombs does beautify:
Not Phœbus griev'd, so much as I,
For him who first was made that mournful tree.

Large was his soul; as large a soul as e'er
Submitted to inform a body here;
High as the place 't was shortly' in heaven to have,
But low and humble as his grave:

So high, that all the Virtues there did come,
As to their chiefest seat
Conspicuous and great;
So low, that for me too it made a room.

He scorn'd this busy world below, and all
That we, mistaken mortals! pleasure call;
Was fill'd with innocent gallantry and truth,
Triumphant o'er the sins of youth.
He, like the stars, to which he now is gone,
That shine with beams like flame,
Yet burn not with the same,
Had all the light of youth, of the fire none.

Knowledge he only sought, and so soon caught,
As if for him Knowledge had rather sought:
Nor did more Learning ever crowded lie
In such a short mortality.
Whene'er the skilful youth discours'd or writ,
Still did the notions throng
About his eloquent tongue,
Nor could his ink flow faster than his wit.

So strong a wit did Nature to him frame,
As all things but his judgment overcame;
His judgment like the heavenly moon did show,
Tempering that mighty sea below.
Oh! had he liv'd in Learning's world, what bound
Would have been able to control
His over-powering soul!
We 'ave lost in him arts that not yet are found.

His mirth was the pure spirits of various wit,
Yet never did his God or friends forget;
And, when deep talk and wisdom came in view,
Retir'd, and gave to them their due:
For the rich help of books he always took,
Though his own searching mind before
Was so with notions written o'er
As if wise Nature had made that her book.

So many virtues join'd in him, as we
Can scarce pick here and there in history;
More than old writers' practice e'er could reach;
As much as they could ever teach.
These did Religion, Queen of virtues! sway;
And all their sacred motions steer,
Just like the first and highest sphere,
Which wheels about, and turns all heaven one way.

With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
He always liv'd, as other saints do die.
Still with his soul severe account he kept,
Weeping all debts out ere he slept:
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
Like the sun's laborious light,
Which still in water sets at night,
Unsullied with his journey of the day.

Wondrous young man! why wert thou made so good,
To be snatch'd hence ere better understood?
Snatch'd before half of thee enough was seen!
Thou ripe, and yet thy life but green!

Nor could thy friends take their last sad farewell;
But danger and infectious death
Maliciously seiz'd on that breath
Where life, spirit, pleasure, always us'd to dwell.

But happy thou, ta'en from this frantic age,
Where ignorance and hypocrisy does rage!
A fitter time for heaven no soul ere chose,
The place now only free from those.
There 'mong the blest thou dost for ever shine,
And, wheresoe'er thou casts'st thy view,
Upon that white and radiant crew,
See'st not a soul cloth'd with more light than thine.

And, if the glorious saints cease not to know
Their wretched friends who fight with life below,
Thy flame to me does still the same abide,
Only more pure and rarefy'd.
There, whilst immortal hymns thou dost rehearse,
Thou dost with holy pity see
Our dull and earthly poesy,
Where grief and misery can be join'd with verse.

ODE.

IN IMITATION OF HORACE'S ODE,

" Quis multâ gracilis te puer in rosâ
" Perfusus," &c. Lib. I. Od. 5.

TO whom now, Pyrrha, art thou kind?
To what heart-ravish'd lover
Dost thou thy golden locks unbind,
Thy hidden sweets discover,
And with large bounty open set
All the bright stores of thy rich cabinet?

Ah, simple youth! how oft will he
Of thy chang'd faith complain!
And his own fortunes find to be
So airy and so vain,
Of so cameleon-like an hue,
That still their colour changes with it too!

How oft, alas! will he admire
The blackness of the skies!
Trembling to hear the wind sound higher,
And see the billows rise!
Poor unexperienc'd he,
Who ne'er, alas! before had been at sea!

He' enjoys thy calmy sun-shine now,
And no breath stirring hears;
In the clear heaven of thy brow
No smallest cloud appears.
He sees thee gentle, fair, and gay,
And trusts the faithless April of thy May.

Unhappy, thrice unhappy, he,
T' whom thou untry'd dost shine!
But there 's no danger now for me,
Since o'er Loretto's shrine,
In witness of the shipwreck past,
My consecrated vessel hangs at last.

IN IMITATION OF

MARTIAL'S EPIGRAM,

"*Si tecum mihi, chare Martialis,*" &c. L. 5. Ep. 21.

IF, dearest friend, it my good fate might be
T' enjoy at once a quiet life and thee;
If we for happiness could leisure find,
And wandering time into a method bind;
We should not sure the great-men's favour need,
Nor on long hopes, the court's thin diet, feed;
We should not patience find daily to hear
The calumnies and flatteries spoken there;

We should not the lords' tables humbly use,
Or talk in ladies' chambers love and news;
But books, and wise discourse, gardens and fields,
And all the joys that unmixt Nature yields;
Thick summer shades, where winter still does lie,
Bright winter fires, that summer's part supply;
Sleep, not control'd by cares, confin'd to night,
Or bound in any rule but appetite;
Free, but not savage or ungracious mirth,
Rich wines, to give it quick and easy birth;
A few companions, which ourselves should chuse,
A gentle mistress, and a gentler Muse.
Such, dearest friend! such, without doubt, should be
Our place, our business, and our company.
Now to himself, alas! does neither live,
But sees good suns, of which we are to give
A strict account, set and march thick away:
Knows a man how to live, and does he stay?

THE CHRONICLE.

A BALLAD.

MARGARITA first possest,
If I remember well, my breast,
Margarita first of all;
But when awhile the wanton maid
With my restless heart had play'd,
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign
To the beauteous Catharine.
Beauteous Catharine gave place
(Though loth and angry she to part
With the possession of my heart)
To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza till this hour might reign,
Had she not evil counsels ta'en.
Fundamental laws she broke,
And still new favourites she chose,
Till up in arms my passions rose,
And cast away her yoke.

Mary then, and gentle Anne,
Both to reign at once began;
Alternately they sway'd;
And sometimes Mary was the fair,
And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,
And sometimes both I' obey'd.

Another Mary then arose,
And did rigorous laws impose;
A mighty tyrant she!
Long, alas! should I have been
Under that iron-scepter'd queen,
Had not Rebecca set me free.

When fair Rebecca set me free,
'T was then a golden time with me:
But soon those pleasures fled;

For the gracious princess dy'd,
In her youth and beauty's pride,
And Judith reigned in her stead.

One month, three days, and half an hour,
Judith held the sovereign power:
Wondrous beautiful her face!
But so weak and small her wit,
That she to govern was unfit,
And so Susanna took her place.

But when Isabella came,
Arm'd with a resistless flame,
And th' artillery of her eye;
Whilst she proudly march'd about,
Greater conquests to find out,
She beat out Susan by the bye.

But in her place I then obey'd
Black-ey'd Bess, her viceroy-maid;
To whom ensued a vacancy:
Thousand worse passions than possest
The interregnum of my breast;
Bless me from such an anarchy!

Gentle Henrietta then,
And a third Mary, next began;
Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria;
And then a pretty Thomasine,
And then another Katharine,
And then a long *et cætera*.

But should I now to you relate,
The strength and riches of their state;
The powder, patches, and the pins,
The ribbons, jewels, and the rings,
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
That make up all their magazines;

If I should tell the politic arts
To take and keep men's hearts;
The letters, embassies, and spies,
The frowns, and smiles, and flatteries,
The quarrels, tears, and perjuries
(Numberless, nameless, mysteries!)

And all the little lime-twigs laid,
By Machiavel the waiting-maid;
I more voluminous should grow
(Chiefly if I like them should tell
All change of weathers that befell)
Than Holinshed or Stow.

But I will briefer with them be,
Since few of them were long with me.
An higher and a nobler strain
My present Emperess does claim,
Heleonora, first o' th' name;
Whom God grant long to reign!

TO

SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT,

UPON HIS TWO FIRST BOOKS OF GONDIBERT, FINISHED BEFORE HIS VOYAGE TO AMERICA.

METHINKS heroick poesy till now,
Like some fantastick fairy-land did show;
Gods, devils, nymphs, witches, and giants' race,
And all but man, in man's chief work had place.
Thou, like some worthy knight with sacred arms,
Dost drive the monsters thence, and end the charms:
Instead of those dost men and manners plant,
The things which that rich soil did chiefly want.
Yet ev'n thy Mortals do their Gods excel,
Taught by thy Muse to fight and love so well.
By fatal hands whilst present empires fall,
Thine from the grave past monarchies recall;
So much more thanks from human-kind does merit
The Poet's fury than the Zealot's spirit:
And from the grave thou mak'st this empire rise,
Not like some dreadful ghost, t' affright our eyes,
But with more lustre and triumphant state,
Than when it crown'd at proud Verona sate.
So will our God rebuild man's perish'd frame,
And raise him up much better, yet the same:
So God-like poets do past things rehearse,
Not change, but heighten, Nature by their verse.
With shame, methinks, great Italy must see
Her conquerors rais'd to life again by thee:

Rais'd by such powerful verse, that ancient Rome
May blush no less to see her wit o'ercome.
Some men their fancies, like their faith, derive,
And think all ill but that which Rome does give;
The marks of Old and Catholick would find;
To the same chair would truth and fiction bind.
Thou in those beaten paths disdain'st to tread,
And scorn'st to live by robbing of the dead.
Since time does all things change, thou think'st not fit
This latter age should see all new but wit;
Thy fancy, like a flame, its way does make,
And leave bright tracks for following pens to take.
Sure 't was this noble boldness of the Muse
Did thy desire to seek new worlds infuse;
And ne'er did Heaven so much a voyage bless,
If thou canst plant but there with like success.

AN ANSWER TO

A COPY OF VERSES

SENT ME TO JERSEY.

AS to a northern people (whom the sun
Uses just as the Romish church has done
Her prophane laity, and does assign
Bread only both to serve for bread and wine)
A rich Canary fleet welcome arrives;
Such comfort to us here your letter gives,

Fraught with brisk racy verses; in which we
The soil from whence they came taste, smell, and see:
Such is your present to us; for you must know,
Sir, that verse does not in this island grow,
No more than sack: one lately did not fear
(Without the Muses' leave) to plant it here;
But it produc'd such base, rough, crabbed, hedge-
Rhymes, as ev'n set the hearers' ears on edge:
Written by ——— ——— Esquire, the
Year of our Lord six hundred thirty-three.
Brave Jersey Muse! and he's for this high style
Call'd to this day the Homer of the Isle.
Alas! to men here no words less hard be
To rhyme with, than * Mount Orgueil is to me;
Mount Orgueil! which, in scorn o' th' Muses' law,
With no yoke-fellow word will deign to draw.
Stubborn Mount Orgueil! 't is a work to make it
Come into rhyme, more hard than 't were to take it.
Alas! to bring your tropes and figures here,
Strange as to bring camels and elephants were;
And metaphor is so unknown a thing,
'T would need the preface of "God save the King."
Yet this I 'll say, for th' honour of the place,
That, by God's extraordinary grace
(Which shows the people have judgment, if not wit)
The land is undefil'd with Clinches yet;
Which, in my poor opinion, I confess,
Is a most singular blessing, and no less

* The name of one of the castles in Jersey.

Than Ireland's wanting spiders. And, so far
From th' actual sin of bombast too they are,
(That other crying sin o' th' English Muse)
That even Satan himself can accuse
None here (no not so much as the divines)
For th' *motus primè primi* to strong lines.
Well, since the soil then does not naturally bear
Verse, who (a devil) should import it here?
For that to me would seem as strange a thing
As who did first wild beasts into' islands bring;
Unless you think that it might taken be
As Green did Gondibert, in a prize at sea:
But that 's a fortune falls not every day;
'T is true Green was made by it; for they say
The parliament did a noble bounty do,
And gave him the whole prize, their tenths and fifteens too.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.

THAT THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE.

Against the Dogmatists.

THE sacred tree 'midst the fair orchard grew;
The Phœnix truth did on it rest,
And built his perfum'd nest;
That right Porphyrian tree which did true Logick shew,
Each leaf did learned notions give,
And th' apples were demonstrative;

So clear their colour and divine,
The very shade they cast did other lights out-shine.

" Taste not, "said God; " 't is mine and angels' meat;
" A certain death doth sit,
" Like an ill worm, i' th' core of it.
" Ye cannot know and live, nor live or know and eat."
Thus spoke God, yet man did go
Ignorantly on to know;
Grew so more blind, and she
Who tempted him to this, grew yet more blind than he.

The only science man by this did get,
Was but to know he nothing knew:
He strait his nakedness did view,
His ignorant poor estate, and was asham'd of it.
Yet searches probabilities,
And rhetorick, and fallacies,
And seeks by useless pride,
With slight and withering leaves that nakedness to hide.

" Henceforth," said God, " the wretched sons of earth
" Shall sweat for food in vain,
" That will not long sustain;
" And bring with labour forth each fond abortive birth.
" That serpent too, their pride,
" Which aims at things deny'd;
" That learn'd and eloquent lust;
" Instead of mounting high, shall creep upon the dust."

REASON,

THE USE OF IT IN DIVINE MATTERS.

SOME blind themselves, 'cause possibly they may
Be led by others a right way;
They build on sands, which if unmov'd they find,
'T is but because there was no wind.
Less hard 't is, not to err ourselves, than know
If our forefathers err'd or no.
When we trust men concerning God, we then
Trust not God concerning men.

Visions and inspirations some expect
Their course here to direct;
Like senseless chemists their own wealth destroy,
Imaginary gold t' enjoy:
So stars appear to drop to us from sky,
And gild the passage as they fly;
But when they fall, and meet th' opposing ground,
What but a sordid slime is found?

Sometimes their fancies they 'bove reason set,
And fast, that they may dream of meat;
Sometimes ill spirits their sickly souls delude,
And bastard forms obtrude:
So Endor's wretched sorceress, although
She Saul through his disguise did know,
Yet, when the devil comes up disguis'd, she cries,
"Behold! the Gods arise."

In vain, alas! these outward hopes are try'd;
Reason within 's our only guide;
Reason, which (God be prais'd!) still walks, for all
Its old original fall:
And, since itself the boundless Godhead join'd
With a reasonable mind,
It plainly shows that mysteries divine
May with our reason join.

The holy book, like the eighth sphere, does shine
With thousand lights of truth divine:
So numberless the stars, that to the eye
It makes but all one galaxy.
Yet Reason must assist too; for, in seas
So vast and dangerous as these,
Our course by stars above we cannot know,
Without the compass too below.

Though Reason cannot through Faith's mysteries see,
It sees that there and such they be;
Leads to heaven's door, and there does humbly keep,
And there through chinks and key-holes peep:
Though it, like Moses, by a sad command,
Must not come into th' Holy Land,
Yet thither it infallibly does guide,
And from afar 't is all descry'd.

ON THE

DEATH OF MR. CRASHAW.

POET and Saint! to thee alone are given
The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven;
The hard and rarest union which can be,
Next that of Godhead with humanity.
Long did the Muses' banish'd slaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;
Like Moses thou (though spells and charms withstand)
Hast brought them nobly home back to their holy land.

Ah wretched we, poets of earth! but thou
Wert living the same poet which thou 'rt now;
Whilst angels sing to thee their airs divine,
And joy in an applause so great as thine.
Equal society with them to hold,
Thou need'st not make new songs, but say the old;
And they (kind spirits!) shall all rejoice, to see
How little less than they exalted man may be.
Still the old Heathen gods in Numbers dwell;
The heavenliest thing on earth still keeps up hell!
Nor have we yet quite purg'd the Christian land;
Still idols here, like calves at Bethel, stand.
And, though Pan's death long since all oracles broke,
Yet still in rhyme the fiend Apollo spoke:
Nay, with the worst of heathen dotage, we
(Vain men!) the monster Woman deify;

Find stars, and tie our fates there in a face,
And paradise in them, by whom we lost it, place.
What different faults corrupt our Muses thus?
Wanton as girls, as old wives fabulous!
Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain
The boundless Godhead; she did well disdain
That her eternal verse employ'd should be
On a less subject than eternity;
And for a sacred mistress scorn'd to take,
But her whom God himself scorn'd not his spouse to make.
It (in a kind) her miracle did do;
A fruitful mother was, and virgin too.
* How well (blest swan!) did Fate contrive thy death,
And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
In thy great mistress' arms, thou most divine
And richest offering of Loretto's shrine!
Where, like some holy sacrifice t'expire,
A fever burns thee, and Love lights the fire.
Angels (they say) brought the fam'd chapel there,
And bore the sacred load in triumph through the air:
'T is surer much they brought thee there; and they,
And thou, their charge, went singing all the way.
Pardon, my mother-church! if I consent
That angels led him when from thee he went;
For ev'n in error sure no danger is,
When join'd with so much piety as his.

* Mr. Crashaw died of a fever at Loretto, being newly chosen canon of that church.

Ah, mighty God! with shame I speak 't, and grief,
Ah, that our greatest faults were in belief!
And our weak reason were ev'n weaker yet,
Rather than thus our wills too strong for it!
His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong; his life, I'm sure, was in the right;
And I myself a Catholick will be,
So far at least, great Saint! to pray to thee.
Hail, bard triumphant! and some care bestow
On us, the poets militant below!
Oppos'd by our old enemy, adverse Chance,
Attack'd by Envy and by Ignorance;
Enchain'd by Beauty, tortur'd by Desires,
Expos'd by Tyrant-Love to savage beasts and fires.
Thou from low earth in nobler flames didst rise,
And, like Elijah, mount alive the skies.
Elisha-like (but with a wish much less,
More fit thy greatness and my littleness)
Lo! here I beg (I, whom thou once didst prove
So humble to esteem, so good to love)
Not that thy spirit might on me double be,
I ask but half thy mighty spirit for me:
And, when my Muse soars with so strong a wing,
'T will learn of things divine, and first of thee, to sing.

ANACREONTIQUES:

OR,

SOME COPIES OF VERSES,

TRANSLATED PARAPHRASTICALLY OUT OF ANACREON.

I.

LOVE.

I 'LL sing of heroes and of kings,
In mighty numbers, mighty things.
Begin, my Muse! but lo! the strings
To my great song rebellious prove;
The strings will sound of nought but love.
I broke them all, and put on new;
'T is this or nothing sure will do.
These sure (said I) will me obey;
These, sure, heroick notes will play.
Strait I began with thundering Jove,
And all th'immortal powers; but Love,
Love smil'd, and from my' enfeebled lyre
Came gentle airs, such as inspire
Melting love and soft desire.
Farewell then, heroes! farewell, kings!
And mighty numbers, mighty things!
Love tunes my heart just to my strings.

II.

DRINKING.

THE thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
And drinks, and gapes for drink again.
The plants suck-in the earth, and are
With constant drinking fresh and fair;
The sea itself (which one would think
Should have but little need of drink)
Drinks twice ten thousand rivers up,
So fill'd that they o'erflow the cup.
The busy sun (and one would guess
By 's drunken fiery face no less)
Drinks up the sea, and, when he 'as done,
The moon and stars drink up the sun:
They drink and dance by their own light;
They drink and revel all the night.
Nothing in nature 's sober found,
But an eternal health goes round.
Fill up the bowl then, fill it high,
Fill all the glasses there; for why
Should every creature drink but I;
Why, man of morals, tell me why?

III.

BEAUTY.

LIBERAL Nature did dispense
To all things arms for their defence;
And some she arms with sinewy force,
And some with swiftness in the course;
Some with hard hoofs or forked claws,
And some with horns or tusked jaws:
And some with scales, and some with wings,
And some with teeth, and some with stings.
Wisdom to man she did afford,
Wisdom for shield, and wit for sword.
What to beauteous womankind,
What arms, what armour, has she' assign'd?
Beauty is both; for with the fair
What arms, what armour, can compare?
What steel, what gold, or diamond,
More impassible is found?
And yet what flame, what lightning, e'er
So great an active force did bear?
They are all weapon, and they dart
Like porcupines from every part.
Who can, alas! their strength express,
Arm'd, when they themselves undress,
Cap-a-pie with nakedness?

IV.

THE DUEL.

YES, I will love then, I will love;
I will not now Love's rebel prove,
Though I was once his enemy;
Though ill-advis'd and stubborn I,
Did to the combat him defy.
An helmet, spear, and mighty shield,
Like some new Ajax, I did wield.
Love in one hand his bow did take,
In th' other hand a dart did shake;
But yet in vain the dart did throw,
In vain he often drew the bow;
So well my armour did resist,
So oft by flight the blow I mist:
But, when I thought all danger past,
His quiver empty'd quite at last,
Instead of arrow or of dart
He shot himself into my heart.
The living and the killing arrow
Ran through the skin, the flesh, the blood,
And broke the bones, and scorch'd the marrow,
No trench or work of life withstood.
In vain I now the walls maintain;
I set out guards and scouts in vain;
Since th' enemy does within remain.

In vain a breast-plate now I wear,
Since in my breast the foe I bear;
In vain my feet their swiftness try;
For from the body can they fly?

V.

AGE.

OFT am I by the women told,
Poor Anacreon! thou grow'st old:
Look how thy hairs are falling all;
Poor Anacreon, how they fall!
Whether I grow old or no,
By th'effects I do not know;
This I know, without being told,
'T is time to live, if I grow old;
'T is time short pleasures now to take,
Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake.

VI.

THE ACCOUNT.

WHEN all the stars are by thee told
(The endless sums of heavenly gold);
Or when the hairs are reckon'd all,
From sickly autumn's head that fall;

Or when the drops that make the sea,
Whilst all her sands they counters be;
Thou then, and thou alone, may'st prove
Th' arithmetician of my love.
An hundred loves at Athens score,
At Corinth write an hundred more:
Fair Corinth does such beauties bear,
So few, is an escaping there.
Write then at Chios seventy-three;
Write then at Lesbos (let me see)
Write me at Lesbos ninety down,
Full ninety loves, and half a one.
And, next to these, let me present
The fair Ionian regiment;
And next the Carian company;
Five hundred both effectively.
Three hundred more at Rhodes and Crete;
Three hundred 't is, I 'm sure, complete;
For arms at Crete each face does bear,
And every eye's an archer there.
Go on: this stop why dost thou make?
Thou think'st, perhaps, that I mistake.
Seems this to thee too great a sum?
Why many thousands are to come;
The mighty Xerxes could not boast
Such different nations in his host.
On; for my love, if thou be'st weary,
Must find some better secretary.
I have not yet my Persian told,
Nor yet my Syrian loves enroll'd,

Nor Indian, nor Arabian;
Nor Cyprian loves, nor African;
Nor Scythian nor Italian flames;
There 's a whole map behind of names
Of gentle loves i' th' temperate zone,
And cold ones in the frigid one,
Cold frozen loves, with which I pine,
And parched loves beneath the Line.

VII.

GOLD.

A MIGHTY pain to love it is,
And 't is a pain that pain to miss;
But, of all pains, the greatest pain
It is to love, but love in vain.
Virtue now, nor noble blood,
Nor wit, by Love is understood;
Gold alone does passion move,
Gold monopolizes love;
A curse on her, and on the man
Who this traffick first began!
A curse on him who found the ore!
A curse on him who digg'd the store!
A curse on him who did refine it!
A curse on him who first did coin it!
A curse, all curses else above,
On him who us'd it first in love!
Gold begets in brethren hate;
Gold in families debate;

Gold does friendships separate;
Gold does civil wars create.
These the smallest harms of it!
Gold, alas! does love beget.

VIII.

THE EPICURE.

FILL the bowl with rosy wine!
Around our temples roses twine!
And let us chearfully awhile,
Like the wine and roses, smile.
Crown'd with roses, we contemn
Gyges' wealthy diadem.
To-day is ours; what do we fear?
To-day is ours; we have it here:
Let 's treat it kindly, that it may
Wish, at least, with us to stay.
Let 's banish business, banish sorrow;
To the Gods belongs to-morrow.

IX.

ANOTHER.

UNDERNEATH this myrtle shade,
On flowery beds supinely laid,
With odorous oils my head o'er-flowing,
And around it roses growing,

What should I do but drink away
The heat and troubles of the day?
In this more than kingly state
Love himself shall on me wait.
Fill to me, Love, nay fill it up;
And mingled cast into the cup
Wit, and mirth, and noble fires,
Vigorous health and gay desires.
The wheel of life no less will stay
In a smooth than rugged way:
Since it equally doth flee,
Let the motion pleasant be.
Why do we precious ointments shower?
Nobler wines why do we pour?
Beauteous flowers why do we spread,
Upon the monuments of the dead?
Nothing they but dust can show,
Or bones that hasten to be so.
Crown me with roses whilst I live,
Now your wines and ointments give;
After death I nothing crave,
Let me alive my pleasures have,
All are Stoicks in the grave.

x.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY insect! what can be
In happiness compar'd to thee?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill;
'T is fill'd wherever thou dost tread,
Nature's self 's thy Ganymede.
Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing;
Happier than the happiest king!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants, belong to thee;
All that summer-hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plow;
Farmer he, and landlord thou!
Thou dost innocently joy;
Nor does thy luxury destroy;
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripen'd year!
Thee Phœbus loves, and does inspire;
Phœbus is himself thy sire.
To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.

Happy insect, happy thou!
Dost neither age nor winter know;
But, when thou'st drunk, and danc'd, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among
(Voluptuous, and wise withal,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

XI.

THE SWALLOW.

FOOLISH prater, what dost thou
So early at my window do,
With thy tuneless serenade?
Well 't had been had Tereus made
Thee as dumb as Philomel;
There his knife had done but well,
In thy undiscover'd nest
Thou dost all the winter rest,
And dreamest o'er thy summer joys,
Free from the stormy seasons' noise:
Free from th'ill thou'st done to me;
Who disturbs or seeks-out thee?
Hadst thou all the charming notes
Of the wood's poetic throats,
All thy art could never pay
What thou'st ta'en from me away.
Cruel bird! thou'st ta'en away
A dream out of my arms to-day;

A dream, that ne'er must equall'd be
By all that waking eyes may see.
Thou, this damage to repair,
Nothing half so sweet or fair,
Nothing half so good, canst bring,
Though men say thou bring'st the spring.

ELEGY UPON ANACREON,

WHO WAS CHOAKED BY A GRAPE-STONE.

Spoken by the God of Love.

HOW shall I lament thine end,
My best servant, and my friend?
Nay, and, if from a Deity
So much deified as I,
It sound not too profane and odd,
Oh, my master and my god!
For 't is true, most mighty poet!
(Though I like not men should know it)
I am in naked nature less,
Less by much, than in thy dress.
All thy verse is softer far
Than the downy feathers are
Of my wings, or of my arrows,
Of my mother's doves or sparrows.

Sweet as lovers' freshest kisses,
Or their riper following blisses,
Graceful, cleanly, smooth, and round,
All with Venus' girdle bound;
And thy life was all the while
Kind and gentle as thy style.
The smooth-pac'd hours of every day
Glided numerously away.
Like thy verse each hour did pass;
Sweet and short, like that, it was.
Some do but their youth allow me,
Just what they by nature owe me,
The time that 's mine, and not their own,
The certain tribute of my crown:
When they grow old, they grow to be
Too busy, or too wise, for me.
Thou wert wiser, and didst know
None too wise for Love can grow;
Love was with thy life entwin'd,
Close as heat with fire is join'd;
A powerful brand prescrib'd the date
Of thine, like Meleager's, fate.
Th'antiperistasis of age
More enflam'd thy amorous rage;
Thy silver hairs yielded me more
Than even golden curls before.
Had I the power of creation,
As I have of generation,
Where I the matter must obey,
And cannot work plate out of clay,

My creatures should be all like thee,
'T is thou shouldst their idea be:
They, like thee, should throughly hate
Business, honour, title, state;
Other wealth they should not know,
But what my living mines bestow;
The pomp of kings, they should confess,
At their crownings, to be less
Than a lover's humblest guise,
When at his mistress' feet he lies.
Rumour they no more should mind
Than men safe-landed do the wind;
Wisdom itself they should not hear,
When it presumes to be severe:
Beauty alone they should admire,
Nor look at Fortune's vain attire,
Nor ask what parents it can shew;
With dead or old 't has nought to do.
They should not love yet all or any,
But very much and very many:
All their life should gilded be
With mirth, and wit, and gaiety;
Well remembering and applying
The necessity of dying.
Their chearful heads should always wear
All that crowns the flowery year:
They should always laugh, and sing,
And dance, and strike th' harmonious string;
Verse should from their tongue so flow,
As if it in the mouth did grow,

As swiftly answering their command,
As tunes obey the artful hand.
And whilst I do thus discover
Th' ingredients of a happy lover,
'T is, my Anacreon! for thy sake
I of the grape no mention make.
Till my Anacreon by thee fell,
Cursed plant! I lov'd thee well;
And 't was oft my wanton use
To dip my arrows in thy juice.
Cursed plant! 't is true, I see,
Th' old report that goes of thee—
That, with giants' blood the earth
Stain'd and poison'd, gave thee birth;
And now thou wreak'st thy ancient spite
On men in whom the gods delight.
Thy patron Bacchus, 't is no wonder,
Was brought forth in flames and thunder;
In rage, in quarrels, and in fights,
Worse than his tigers, he delights;
In all our heaven I think there be
No such ill-natur'd God as he.
Thou pretendest, traiterous Wine!
To be the Muses' friend and mine:
With love and wit thou dost begin,
False fires, alas! to draw us in;
Which, if our course we by them keep,
Misguide to madness or to sleep:
Sleep were well; thou 'ast learnt a way
To death itself now to betray.

It grieves me when I see what fate
Does on the best of mankind wait.
Poets or lovers let them be,
'T is neither love nor poesy
Can arm, against death's smallest dart,
The poet's head or lover's heart;
But when their life, in its decline,
Touches th' inevitable line,
All the world 's mortal to them then,
And wine is aconite to men;
Nay, in death's hand, the grape-stone proves
As strong as thunder is in Jove's.

VERSES

WRITTEN

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

CHRIST'S PASSION,

TAKEN OUT OF A GREEK ODE, WRITTEN BY MR. MASTERS, OF NEW-COLLEGE, IN OXFORD.

ENOUGH, my Muse! of earthly things,
And inspirations but of wind;
Take up thy lute, and to it bind
Loud and everlasting strings;
And on them play, and to them sing,
The happy mournful stories,
The lamentable glories,
Of the great crucified King.
Mountainous heap of wonders! which dost rise
Till earth thou joinest with the skies!
Too large at bottom, and at top too high,
To be half seen by mortal eye!
How shall I grasp this boundless thing?
What shall I play? what shall I sing?
I'll sing the mighty riddle of mysterious love,
Which neither wretched men below, nor blessed spirits above,
With all their comments can explain;
How all the whole world's life to die did not disdain!

I'll sing the searchless depths of the compassion Divine,
The depths unfathom'd yet
By reason's plummet, and the line of wit;
Too light the plummet, and too short the line!

How the eternal Father did bestow
His own eternal Son as ransom for his foe,
I 'll sing aloud, that all the world may hear
The triumph of the buried Conqueror.
How hell was by its prisoner captive led,
And the great slayer, Death, slain by the dead.

Methinks I hear of murdered men the voice,
Mixt with the murderers' confused noise,
Sound from the top of Calvary;
My greedy eyes fly up the hill, and see
Who 't is hangs there the midmost of the three;
Oh, how unlike the others He!
Look, how he bends his gentle head with blessings from the tree!
His gracious hands, ne'er stretch'd but to do good,
Are nail'd to the infamous wood;
And sinful man does fondly bind
The arms, which he extends t' embrace all humankind.

Unhappy man! canst thou stand by and see
All this as patient as he?
Since he thy sins does bear,
Make thou his sufferings thine own,
And weep, and sigh, and groan,
And beat thy breast, and tear
Thy garments and thy hair,
And let thy grief, and let thy love,
Through all thy bleeding bowels move.

Dost thou not see thy Prince in purple clad all o'er,
Not purple brought from the Sidonian shore,
But made at home with richer gore?
Dost thou not see the roses which adorn
The thorny garland by him worn?
Dost thou not see the livid traces
Of the sharp scourges' rude embraces?
If yet thou feelest not the smart
Of thorns and scourges in thy heart;
If that be yet not crucify'd;
Look on his hands, look on his feet, look on his side!

Open, oh! open wide the fountains of thine eyes,
And let them call
Their stock of moisture forth where'er it lies!
For this will ask it all.
'T would all, alas! too little be,
Though thy salt tears come from a sea.
Canst thou deny him this, when he
Has open'd all his vital springs for thee?
Take heed; for by his side's mysterious flood
May well be understood,
That he will still require some waters to his blood.

ODE

ON ORINDA'S POEMS.

WE allow'd you beauty, and we did submit
To all the tyrannies of it;
Ah! cruel sex, will you depose us too in wit?
Orinda* does in that too reign;
Does man behind her in proud triumph draw,
And cancel great Apollo's Salique law.
We our old title plead in vain,
Man may be head, but woman 's now the brain.
Verse was love's fire-arms heretofore,
In Beauty's camp it was not known;
Too many arms besides that conqueror bore:
'T was the great cannon we brought down
T' assault a stubborn town;
Orinda first did a bold sally make,
Our strongest quarter take,
And so successful prov'd, that she
Turn'd upon Love himself his own artillery.

Woman, as if the body were their whole,
Did that, and not the soul,
Transmit to their posterity;
If in it sometime they conceiv'd,
Th' abortive issue never liv'd.
'T were shame and pity', Orinda, if in thee

* Mrs. Catharine Philips.

A spirit so rich, so noble, and so high,
Should unmanur'd or barren lie.
But thou industriously hast sow'd and till'd
The fair and fruitful field;
And 't is a strange increase that it does yield.
As, when the happy Gods above
Meet altogether at a feast,
A secret joy unspeakable does move
In their great mother Cybele's contented breast:
With no less pleasure thou, methinks, should see
This thy no less immortal progeny;
And in their birth thou no one touch dost find
Of th' ancient curse to woman-kind:
Thou bring'st not forth with pain;
It neither travail is nor labour of the brain:
So easily they from thee come,
And there is so much room
In th' unexhausted and unfathom'd womb,
That, like the Holland Countess, thou may'st bear
A child for every day of all the fertile year.

Thou dost my wonder, wouldst my envy, raise,
If to be prais'd I lov'd more than to praise:
Where'er I see an excellence,
I must admire to see thy well-knit sense,
Thy numbers gentle, and thy fancies high;
Those as thy forehead smooth, these sparkling as thine eye.
'T is solid, and 't is manly all,
Or rather 't is angelical;

For, as in angels, we
Do in thy verses see
Both improv'd sexes eminently meet;
They are than man more strong, and more than woman sweet.

They talk of Nine, I know not who,
Female chimeras, that o'er poets reign;
I ne'er could find that fancy true,
But have invok'd them oft, I 'm sure, in vain:
They talk of Sappho; but, alas! the shame!
Ill-manners soil the lustre of her fame;
Orinda's inward virtue is so bright,
That, like a lantern's fair inclosed light,
It through the paper shines where she does write.
Honour and friendship, and the generous scorn
Of things for which we were not born
(Things that can only by a fond disease,
Like that of girls, our vicious stomachs please)
Are the instructive subjects of her pen:
And, as the Roman victory
Taught our rude land arts and civility,
At once she overcomes, enslaves, and betters, men.

But Rome with all her arts could ne'er inspire
A female breast with such a fire:
The warlike Amazonian train,
Who in Elysium now do peaceful reign,
And Wit's mild empire before arms prefer,
Hope 't will be settled in their sex by her.

Merlin the seer (and sure he would not lye
In such a sacred company)
Does prophecies of learn'd Orinda show,
Which he had darkly spoke so long ago;
Ev'n Boadicia's angry ghost
Forgets her own misfortune and disgrace,
And to her injur'd daughters now does boast,
That Rome 's o'ercome at last by a woman of her race.

ODE

UPON OCCASION OF A COPY OF VERSES OF MY LORD BROGHILL'S.

BE gone (said I), ingrateful Muse! and see
What others thou canst fool, as well as me.
Since I grew man, and wiser ought to be,
My business and my hopes I left for thee:
For thee (which was more hardly given away)
I left, even when a boy, my play.
But say, ingrateful mistress! say,
What for all this, what didst thou ever pay?
Thou 'lt say, perhaps, that riches are
Not of the growth of lands where thou dost trade,
And I as well my country might upbraid
Because I have no vineyard there.

Well: but in love thou dost pretend to reign;
There thine the power and lordship is;
Thou bad'st me write, and write, and write again;
'T was such a way as could not miss.
I, like a fool, did thee obey:
I wrote, and wrote, but still I wrote in vain;
For, after all my expence of wit and pain,
A rich, unwriting hand carried the prize away.

Thus I complain'd, and straight the Muse reply'd,
That she had given me fame.
Bounty immense! and that too must be try'd
When I myself am nothing but a name.
Who now, what reader does not strive
T' invalidate the gift whilst we 're alive?
For, when a poet now himself doth show,
As if he were a common foe,
All draw upon him, all around,
And every part of him they wound,
Happy the man that gives the deepest blow;
And this is all, kind Muse! to thee we owe.
Then in rage I took,
And out at window threw,
Ovid and Horace, all the chiming crew;
Homer himself went with them too;
Hardly escap'd the sacred Mantuan book:
I my own offspring, like Agave, tore,
And I resolv'd, nay, and I think I swore,
That I no more the ground would till and sow,
Where only flowery weeds instead of corn did grow.

When (see the subtle ways which Fate does find
Rebellious man to bind
Just to the work for which he is assign'd!)
The Muse came in more cheerful than before,
And bade me quarrel with her now no more:
"Lo! thy reward! look here, and see
"What I have made" (said she),
"My lover and belov'd, my Broghill, do for thee!
"Though thy own verse no lasting fame can give,
"Thou shalt at least in his for ever live.
"What criticks, the great Hectors now in wit,
"Who rant and challenge all men that have writ,
"Will dare t' oppose thee, when
"Broghill in thy de fence has drawn his conquering
"pen?"
I rose, and bow'd my head,
And pardon ask'd for all that I had said:
Well satisfy'd and proud,
I straight resolv'd, and solemnly I vow'd,
That from her service now I ne'er would part;
So strongly large rewards work on a grateful heart!

Nothing so soon the drooping spirits can raise
As praises from the men whom all men praise:
'T is the best cordial, and which only those
Who have at home th' ingredients can compose;
A cordial that restores our fainting breath,
And keeps up life e'en after death!
The only danger is, lest it should be
Too strong a remedy;

Lest, in removing cold, it should beget
Too violent a heat;
And into madness turn the lethargy.
Ah! gracious God! that I might see
A time when it were dangerous for me
To be o'er-heat with praise!
But I within me bear, alas! too great allays.

'T is said, Apelles, when he Venus drew,
Did naked women for his pattern view,
And with his powerful fancy did refine
Their human shapes into a form divine;
None who had sat could her own picture see,
Or say, one part was drawn for me:
So, though this nobler painter, when he writ,
Was pleas'd to think it fit
That my book should before him sit,
Not as a cause, but an occasion, to his wit;
Yet what have I to boast, or to apply
To my advantage out of it; since I,
Instead of my own likeness, only find
The bright idea there of the great writer's mind?

ODE.

MR. COWLEY'S BOOK PRESENTING ITSELF TO THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OF OXFORD.

HAIL, Learning's Pantheon! Hail, the sacred ark
Where all the world of science does embark! [stood,
Which ever shall withstand, and hast so long with-
Insatiate Time's devouring flood.
Hail, tree of knowledge! thy leaves fruit! which well
Dost in the midst of paradise arise,
Oxford! the Muses' paradise,
From which may never sword the bless'd expel!
Hail, bank of all past ages! where they lie
T' enrich with interest posterity!
Hail, Wit's illustrious Galaxy!
Where thousand lights into one brightness spread;
Hail, living University of the dead!

Unconfus'd Babel of all tongues! which e'er
The mighty linguist Fame, or Time, the mighty tra-
That could speak, or this could hear. [veller,
Majestick monument and pyramid!
Where still the shades of parted souls abide
Embalm'd in verse; exalted souls which now
Enjoy those arts they woo'd so well below;
Which now all wonders plainly see,
That have been, are, or are to be,
In the mysterious library,
The beatifick Bodley of the Deity!....

Will you into your sacred throng admit
The meanest British Wit?
You, general-council of the priests of Fame,
Will you not murmur and disdain,
That I a place among you claim,
The humblest deacon of her train?
Will you allow me th' honourable chain?
The chain of ornament, which here
Your noble prisoners proudly wear;
A chain which will more pleasant seem to me
Than all my own Pindarick liberty!
Will ye to bind me with those mighty names submit,
Like an Apocrypha with holy Writ?
Whatever happy book is chained here,
No other place or people need to fear;
His chain 's a passport to go every-where.

As when a seat in heaven
Is to an unmalicious sinner given,
Who, casting round his wondering eye,
Does none but patriarchs and apostles there espy;
Martyrs who did their lives bestow,
And saints, who martyrs liv'd below;
With trembling and amazement he begins
To recollect his frailties past and sins;
He doubts almost his station there;
His soul says to itself, "How came I here?"
It fares no otherwise with me,
When I myself with conscious wonder see
Amidst this purify'd elected company.

With hardship they, and pain,
Did to this happiness attain:
No labour I, nor merits, can pretend;
I think predestination only was my friend.

Ah, that my author had been ty'd like me
To such a place and such a company!
Instead of several countries, several men,
And business, which the Muses hate,
He might have then improv'd that small estate
Which Nature sparingly did to him give;
He might perhaps have thriven then,
And settled upon me, his child, somewhat to live.

'T had happier been for him, as well as me;
For when all, alas! is done,
We books, I mean, You books, will prove to be
The best and noblest conversation:
For, though some errors will get in,
Like tinctures of original sin;
Yet sure we from our fathers' wit
Draw all the strength and spirit of it,
Leaving the grosser parts for conversation,
As the best blood of man 's employ'd in generation.

ODE.

SITTING AND DRINKING IN THE CHAIR MADE OUT OF THE RELICKS OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S SHIP.

CHEER up, my mates, the wind does fairly blow,
Clap on more sail, and never spare;
Farewell all lands, for now we are
In the wide sea of drink, and merrily we go.
Bless me, 't is hot! another bowl of wine,
And we shall cut the burning Line:
Hey, boys! she scuds away, and by my head I know
We round the world are sailing now.
What dull men are those that tarry at home,
When abroad they might wantonly roam,
And gain such experience, and spy too
Such countries and wonders, as I do!
But pr'ythee, good pilot, take heed what you do,
And fail not to touch at Peru!
With gold there the vessel we 'll store,
And never, and never be poor,
No, never be poor any more.

What do I mean? What thoughts do me misguide?
As well upon a staff may witches ride
Their fancy'd journeys in the air,
As I sail round the ocean in this chair!
'T is true; but yet this chair which here you see,
For all tis quite now, and gravity,

Has wander'd and has travell'd more
Than ever beast, or fish, or bird, or ever tree, before:
In every air and every sea 't has been, ['t has seen.
'T has compass'd all the earth, and all the heavens
Let not the Pope's itself with this compare,
This is the only universal chair.

The pious wanderer's fleet, sav'd from the flame
(Which still the relicks did of Troy pursue,
And took them for its due),
A squadron of immortal nymphs became:
Still with their arms they row about the seas,
And still make new and greater voyages:
Nor has the first poetick ship of Greece
(Though now a star she so triumphant show,
And guide her sailing successors below,
Bright as her ancient freight the shining fleece)
Yet to this day a quiet harbour found;
The tide of heaven still carries her around.
Only Drake's sacred vessel (which before
Had done and had seen more
Than those have done or seen,
Ev'n since they Goddesses and this a Star has been),
As a reward for all her labour past,
Is made the seat of rest at last.
Let the case now quite alter'd be,
And, as thou went'st abroad the world to see,
Let the world now come to see thee!
The world will do 't; for curiosity
Does, no less than devotion, pilgrims make;

And I myself, who now love quiet too,
As much almost as any chair can do,
Would yet a journey take,
An old wheel of that chariot to see,
Which Phaeton so rashly brake: [Drake?
Yet what could that say more than these remains of
Great relick! thou too, in this port of ease,
Hast still one way of making voyages;
The breath of Fame, like an auspicious gale
(The great trade-wind which ne'er does fail)
Shall drive thee round the world, and thou shalt run
As long around it as the sun.
The streights of Time too narrow are for thee;
Launch forth into an undiscover'd sea,
And steer the endless course of vast Eternity!
Take for thy sail this verse, and for thy pilot me!

UPON THE DEATH OF

THE EARL OF BARCARRES.

'T IS folly all that can be said
By living mortals of th'immortal dead,
And I'm afraid they laugh at the vain tears we shed.
'T is as if we, who stay behind
In expectation of the wind,
Should pity those who pass'd this streight before,
And touch the universal shore.
Ah, happy man! who art to sail no more!

And, if it seem'd ridiculous to grieve
Because our friends are newly come from sea,
Though ne'er so fair and calm it be;
What would all sober men believe,
If they should hear us sighing say,
" Balcarres, who but th'other day
" Did all our love and our respect command;
" At whose great parts we all amaz'd did stand;
" Is from a storm, alas! cast suddenly on land?"

If you will say—Few persons upon earth
Did, more than he, deserve to have
A life exempt from fortune and the grave;
Whether you look upon his birth
And ancestors, whose fame 's so widely spread—
But ancestors, alas! who long ago are dead—
Or whether you consider more
The vast increase, as sure you ought,
Of honour by his labour bought,
And added to the former store:
All I can answer, is, That I allow
The privilege you plead for; and avow
That, as he well deserv'd, he doth enjoy it now.

Though God, for great and righteous ends,
Which his unerring Providence intends
Erroneous mankind should not understand,
Would not permit Balcarres' hand
(That once with so much industry and art
Had clos'd the gaping wounds of every part)

To perfect his distracted nation's cure,
Or stop the fatal bondage 't was t' endure;
Yet for his pains he soon did him remove,
From all th' oppression and the woe
Of his frail body's native soil below,
To his soul's true and peaceful country above:
So Godlike kings, for secret causes, known
Sometimes but to themselves alone,
One of their ablest ministers elect,
And send abroad to treaties which they' intend
Shall never take effect;
But, though the treaty wants a happy end,
The happy agent wants not the reward,
For which he labour'd faithfully and hard;
His just and righteous master calls him home,
And gives him, near himself, some honourable room.

Noble and great endeavours did he bring
To save his country, and restore his king;
And, whilst the manly half of him (which those
Who know not Love, to be the whole suppose)
Perform'd all parts of virtue's vigorous life;
The beauteous half, his lovely wife,
Did all his labours and his cares divide;
Nor was a lame nor paralytic side:
In all the turns of human state,
And all th' unjust attacks of Fate,
She bore her share and portion still,
And would not suffer any to be ill.
Unfortunate for ever let me be,
If I believe that such was he,

Whom, in the storms of bad success,
And all that Error calls unhappiness,
His virtue and his virtuous wife did still accompany!

With these companions 't was not strange
That nothing could his temper change.
His own and country's union had not weight
Enough to crush his mighty mind!
He saw around the hurricanes of state,
Fixt as an island 'gainst the waves and wind.
Thus far the greedy sea may reach;
All outward things are but the beach;
A great man's soul it doth assault in vain!
Their God himself the ocean doth restrain
With an imperceptible chain,
And bid it to go back again.
His wisdom, justice, and his piety,
His courage both to suffer and to die,
His virtues, and his lady too,
Were things celestial. And we see,
In spite of quarrelling philosophy,
How in this case 't is certain found,
That Heav'n stands still, and only earth goes round.

ODE.

UPON DR. HARVEY.

COY Nature (which remain'd, though aged grown,
A beauteous virgin still, enjoy'd by none,
Nor seen unveil'd by any one),
When Harvey's violent passion she did see,
Began to tremble and to flee;
Took sanctuary, like Daphne, in a tree:
There Daphne's lover stopp'd, and thought it much
The very leaves of her to touch:
But Harvey, our Apollo, stopp'd not so;
Into the bark and root he after her did go!
No smallest fibres of a plant,
For which the eye-beams' point doth sharpness want,
His passage after her withstood.
What should she do? Through all the moving wood
Of lives endow'd with sense she took her flight;
Harvey pursues, and keeps her still in sight.
But, as the deer, long-hunted, takes a flood,
She leap'd at last into the winding streams of blood;
Of man's mæander all the purple reaches made,
Till at the heart she stay'd;
Where turning head, and at a bay,
Thus by well-purged ears was she o'erheard to say:

"Here sure shall I be safe" (said she),
"None will be able sure to see

" This my retreat, but only He
" Who made both it and me.
" The heart of man what art can e'er reveal?
" A wall impervious between
" Divides the very parts within, [ceal."
" And doth the heart of man ev'n from itself con-
She spoke: but, ere she was aware,
Harvey was with her there;
And held this slippery Proteus in a chain,
Till all her mighty mysteries he descry'd;
Which from his wit th'attempt before to hide
Was the first thing that Nature did in vain.

He the young practice of new life did see,
Whilst, to conceal its toilsome poverty,
It for a living wrought, both hard and privately.
Before the liver understood
The noble scarlet dye of blood;
Before one drop was by it made,
Or brought into it, to set up the trade;
Before the untaught heart began to beat
The tuneful march to vital heat;
From all the souls that living buildings rear,
Whether imply'd for earth, or sea, or air;
Whether it in the womb or egg be wrought;
A strict account to him is hourly brought
How the great fabrick does proceed,
What time, and what materials, it does need:
He so exactly does the work survey,
As if he hir'd the workers by the day.

Thus Harvey sought for Truth in Truth's own book,
The creatures—which by God himself was writ;
And wisely thought 't was fit,
Not to read comments only upon it,
But on th' original itself to look.
Methinks in Art's great circle others stand
Lock'd-up together, hand in hand;
Every one leads as he is led;
The same bare path they tread,
And dance, like fairies, a fantastick round,
But neither change their motion nor their ground:
Had Harvey to this road confin'd his wit, [yet.
His noble circle of the blood had been untrodden
Great Doctor! th'art of curing 's cur'd by thee;
We now thy patient, Physick, see
From all inveterate diseases free,
Purg'd of old errors by thy care,
New dieted, put forth to clearer air;
It now will strong and healthful prove;
Itself before lethargick lay, and could not move!

These useful secrets to his pen we owe!
And thousands more 't was ready to bestow;
Of which a barbarous war's unlearned rage
Has robb'd the ruin'd age:
O cruel loss! as if the golden fleece,
With so much cost and labour bought,
And from afar by a great hero brought,
Had sunk ev'n in the ports of Greece.
O cursed war! who can forgive thee this?

Houses and towns may rise again;
And ten times easier 't is
To rebuild Paul's, than any work of his:
That mighty task none but himself can do,
Nay, scarce himself too, now;
For, though his wit the force of age withstand,
His body, alas! and time, it must command;
And Nature now, so long by him surpass'd,
Will sure have her revenge on him at last.

ODE,

FROM CATULLUS.

ACME and SEPTIMIUS.

WHILST on Septimius' panting breast
(Meaning nothing less than rest)
Acme lean'd her loving head,
Thus the pleas'd Septimius said:

My dearest Acme, if I be
Once alive, and love not thee
With a passion far above
All that e'er was called love;
In a Libyan desert may
I become some lion's prey;
Let him, Acme, let him tear
My breast, when Acme is not there.

The God of Love, who stood to hear him
(The God of Love was always near him),
Pleas'd and tickled with the sound,
Sneez'd aloud; and all around
The little Loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and blest the augury.
Acme, enflam'd with what he said,
Rear'd her gently-bending head;
And, her purple mouth with joy
Stretching to the delicious boy,
Twice (and twice could scarce suffice)
She kiss'd his drunken rolling eyes.

My little life, my all! (said she)
So may we ever servants be
To this best God, and ne'er retain
Our hated liberty again!
So may thy passion last for me,
As I a passion have for thee,
Greater and fiercer much than can
Be conceiv'd by thee a man!
Into my marrow is it gone,
Fixt and settled in the bone;
It reigns not only in my heart,
But runs, like life, through every part.
She spoke; the God of Love aloud
Sneez'd again; and all the crowd
Of little Loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and blest the augury.

This good omen thus from heaven
Like a happy signal given,
Their loves and lives (all four) embrace,
And hand in hand run all the race.
To poor Septimius (who did now
Nothing else but Acme grow)
Acme's bosom was alone
The whole world's imperial throne;
And to faithful Acme's mind
Septimius was all human-kind.

If the Gods would please to be
But advis'd for once by me,
I 'd advise them, when they spy
Any illustrious piety,
To reward her, if it be she—
To reward him, if it be he—
With such a husband, such a wife;
With Acme's and Septimius' life.

ODE

UPON HIS MAJESTY'S RESTORATION AND RETURN.

" —Quod optanti divûm promittere nemo
" Auderet, volvenda dies, en, attulit ultro."

VIRG.

NOW blessings on you all, ye peaceful stars,
Which meet at last so kindly, and dispense
Your universal gentle influence
To calm the stormy world, and still the rage of wars!
Nor, whilst around the continent
Plenipotentiary beams ye sent,
Did your pacifick lights disdain
In their large treaty to contain
The world apart, o'er which do reign
Your seven fair brethren of great Charles's-wain;
No star amongst ye all did, I believe,
Such vigorous assistance give,
As that which, thirty years ago,
At * Charles's birth, did, in despite
Of the proud sun's meridian light,
His future glories and this year foreshow.

* The star that appeared at noon, the day of the king's birth, just as the king his father was riding to St. Paul's to give thanks to God for that blessing.

No less effects than these we may
Be assur'd of from that powerful ray,
Which could outface the sun, and overcome the day.

Auspicious star! again arise,
And take thy noon-tide station in the skies,
Again all heaven prodigiously adorn;
For, lo! thy Charles again is born.
He then was born with and to pain;
With and to joy he 's born again.
And, wisely for this second birth,
By which thou certain wert to bless
The land with full and flourishing happiness,
Thou mad'st of that fair month thy choice,
In which heaven, air, and sea, and earth,
And all that 's in them, all, does smile and does rejoice.
'T was a right season; and the very ground
Ought with a face of paradise to be found,
Then, when we were to entertain
Felicity and innocence again.

Shall we again (good Heaven!) that blessed pair behold,
Which the abused people fondly sold
For the bright fruit of the forbidden tree,
By seeking all like Gods to be?
Will Peace her halcyon nest venture to build
Upon a shore with shipwrecks fill'd,

And trust that sea, where she can hardly say
She 'as known these twenty years one calmy day?
Ah! mild and gall-less dove,
Which dost the pure and candid dwellings love,
Canst thou in Albion still delight?
Still canst thou think it white?
Will ever fair Religion appear
In these deformed ruins? will she clear
Th' Augean stables of her churches here?
Will Justice hazard to be seen
Where a High Court of Justice e'er has been?
Will not the tragick scene,
And Bradshaw's bloody ghost, affright her there,
Her, who shall never fear?
Then may Whitehall for Charles's seat be fit,
If Justice shall endure at Westminster to sit.

Of all, methinks, we least should see
The cheerful looks again of Liberty.
That name of Cromwell, which does freshly still
The curses of so many sufferers fill,
Is still enough to make her stay,
And jealous for a while remain,
Lest, as a tempest carried him away,
Some hurricane should bring him back again.
Or, she might justlier be afraid
Lest that great serpent, which was all a tail
(And in his poisonous folds whole nations prisoners made),
Should a third time perhaps prevail

To join again, and with worse sting arise,
As it had done when cut in pieces twice.
Return, return, ye sacred Four!
And dread your perish'd enemies no more.
Your fears are causeless all, and vain,
Whilst you return in Charles's train;
For God does him, that he might you, restore,
Nor shall the world him only call
Defender of the faith, but of you all.

Along with you plenty and riches go,
With a full tide to every port they flow,
With a warm fruitful wind o'er all the country blow.
Honour does as ye march her trumpet sound,
The Arts encompass you around,
And, against all alarms of Fear,
Safety itself brings up the rear;
And, in the head of this angelick band,
Lo! how the goodly Prince at last does stand
(O righteous God!) on his own happy land:
'T is happy now, which could with so much ease
Recover from so desperate a disease;
A various complicated ill,
Whose every symptom was enough to kill;
In which one part of three phrensy possest,
And lethargy the rest:
'T is happy, which no bleeding does endure,
A surfeit of such blood to cure;
'T is happy, which beholds the flame
In which by hostile hands it ought to burn,

Or that which, if from Heaven it came,
It did but well deserve, all into bonfire turn.

We fear'd (and almost touch'd the black degree
Of instant expectation)
That the three dreadful angels we,
Of famine, sword, and plague, should here establish'd see
(God's great triumvirate of desolation!)
To scourge and to destroy the sinful nation.
Justly might Heaven Protectors such as those,
And such Committees for their Safety, impose
Upon a land which scarcely better chose.
We fear'd that the Fanatick war,
Which men against God's houses did declare,
Would from th' Almighty enemy bring down
A sure destruction on our own.
We read th' instructive histories which tell
Of all those endless mischiefs that befel
The sacred town which God had lov'd so well,
After that fatal curse had once been said,
"His blood be upon ours and on our children's head!"
We know, though there a greater blood was spilt,
'T was scarcely done with greater guilt.
We know those miseries did befal
Whilst they rebell'd against that Prince, whom all
The rest of mankind did the love and joy of mankind call.

Already was the shaken nation
Into a wild and deform'd chaos brought,

And it was hasting on (we thought)
Even to the last of ills—annihilation:
When, in the midst of this confused night,
Lo! the blest Spirit mov'd, and there was light;
For, in the glorious General's previous ray,
We saw a new-created day:
We by it saw, though yet in mists it shone,
The beauteous work of Order moving on.
Where are the men who bragg'd that God did bless,
And with the marks of good success
Sign his allowance of their wickedness?
Vain men! who thought the Divine Power to find
In the fierce thunder and the violent wind:
God came not till the storm was past;
In the still voice of Peace he came at last!
The cruel business of destruction
May by the claws of the great fiend be done;
Here, here we see th' Almighty's hand indeed,
Both by the beauty of the work we see 't, and by the speed.

He who had seen the noble British heir,
Even in that ill, disadvantageous light
With which misfortune strives t' abuse our sight—
He who had seen him in his cloud so bright—
He who had seen the double pair
Of brothers, heavenly good! and sisters, heavenly fair!—
Might have perceiv'd, methinks, with ease
(But wicked men see only what they please)

That God had no intent t' extinguish quite
The pious king's eclipsed right.
He who had seen how by the Power Divine
All the young branches of this royal line
Did in their fire, without consuming, shine—
How through a rough Red-sea they had been led,
By wonders guarded, and by wonders fed—
How many years of trouble and distress
They 'd wander'd in their fatal wilderness,
And yet did never murmur or repine;—
Might, methinks, plainly understand,
That, after all these conquer'd trials past,
Th' Almighty mercy would at last
Conduct them with a strong unerring hand
To their own Promis'd Land:
For all the glories of the earth
Ought to be entail'd by right of birth;
And all Heaven's blessings to come down
Upon his race, to whom alone was given
The double royalty of earth and heaven;
Who crown'd the kingly with the martyrs' crown.

The martyrs' blood was said of old to be
The seed from whence the Church did grow.
The royal blood which dying Charles did sow
Becomes no less the seed of royalty:
'T was in dishonour sown;
We find it now in glory grown,
The grave could but the dross of it devour;
" 'T was sown in weakness, and 't is rais'd in power."

We now the question well decided see,
Which eastern Wits did once contest,
At the great Monarch's feast,
" Of all on earth what things the strongest be ?"
And some for women, some for wine, did plead;
That is, for Folly and for Rage,
Two things which we have known indeed
Strong in this latter age;
But, as 't is prov'd by Heaven, at length,
The King and Truth have greatest strength,
When they their sacred force unite,
And twine into one right:
No frantick commonwealths or tyrannies;
No cheats, and perjuries, and lyes;
No nets of human policies;
No stores of arms or gold (though you could join
Those of Peru to the great London mine);
No towns; no fleets by sea, or troops by land;
No deeply-entrench'd islands, can withstand,
Or any small resistance bring
Against the naked Truth and the unarmed King.

The foolish lights which travellers beguile
End the same night when they begin;
No art so far can upon nature win
As e'er to put-out stars, or long keep meteors in.
Where 's now that *Ignus fatuus*, which ere-while
Misled our wandering isle ?
Where 's the impostor Cromwell gone ?
Where 's now that Falling-star, his son ?

Where 's the large Comet now, whose raging
flame
So fatal to our monarchy became;
Which o'er our heads in such proud horror stood,
Insatiate with our ruin and our blood?
The fiery tail did to vast length extend;
And twice for want of fuel did expire,
And twice renew'd the dismal fire:
Though long the tail, we saw at last its end.
The flames of one triumphant day,
Which, like an anti-comet here,
Did fatally to that appear,
For ever frighted it away:
Then did th' allotted hour of dawning right
First strike our ravish'd sight;
Which malice or which art no more could stay,
Than witches' charms can a retardment bring
To the resuscitation of the day,
Or resurrection of the spring.
We welcome both, and with improv'd delight
Bless the preceding winter, and the night!

Man ought his future happiness to fear,
If he be always happy here—
He wants the bleeding marks of grace,
The circumcision of the chosen race.
If no one part of him supplies
The duty of a sacrifice,
He is, we doubt, reserv'd intire
As a whole victim for the fire.

Besides, ev'n in this world below,
To those who never did ill-fortune know,
The good does nauseous or insipid grow.
Consider man's whole life, and you 'll confess
The sharp ingredient of some bad success
Is that which gives the taste to all his happiness.
But the true method of felicity
Is, when the worst
Of human life is plac'd the first,
And when the child's correction proves to be
The cause of perfecting the man:
Let our weak days lead up the van;
Let the brave Second and Triarian band
Firm against all impression stand:
The first we may defeated see;
The virtue and the force of these are sure of victory.

Such are the years, great Charles! which now we see
Begin their glorious march with thee:
Long may their march to heaven, and still triumphant, be!
Now thou art gotten once before,
Ill-fortune never shall o'ertake thee more.
To see 't again, and pleasure in it find,
Cast a disdainful look behind;
Things which offend when present, and affright,
In memory well-painted move delight.
Enjoy, then all thy' afflictions now—
Thy royal father's came at last;
Thy martyrdom 's already past:
And different crowns to both ye owe.

No gold did e'er the kingly temples bind,
Than thine more try'd and more refin'd.
As a choice medal for Heaven's treasury
God did stamp first upon one side of thee
The image of his suffering humanity:
On th' other side, turn'd now to sight, does shine
The glorious image of his power divine!

So, when the wisest poets seek
In all their liveliest colours to set forth
A picture of heroic worth
(The pious Trojan or the prudent Greek);
They choose some comely prince of heavenly birth
(No proud gigantic son of earth,
Who strives t' usurp the gods' forbidden seat);
They feed him not with nectar, and the meat
That cannot without joy be eat;
But, in the cold of want, and storms of adverse chance,
They harden his young virtue by degrees:
The beauteous drop first into ice does freeze,
And into solid crystal next advance.
His murder'd friends and kindred he does see,
And from his flaming country flee:
Much is he tost at sea, and much at land;
Does long the force of angry gods withstand:
He does long troubles and long wars sustain,
Ere he his fatal birth-right gain.
With no less time or labour can
Destiny build up such a man,
Who 's with sufficient virtue fill'd
His ruin'd country to rebuild.

Nor without cause are arms from Heaven
To such a hero by the poets given:
No human metal is of force t' oppose
So many and so violent blows.
Such was the helmet, breast-plate, shield,
Which Charles in all attacks did wield:
And all the weapons malice e'er could try,
Of all the several makes of wicked policy,
Against this armour struck, but at the stroke,
Like swords of ice, in thousand pieces broke.
To angels and their brethren spirits above,
No show on earth can sure so pleasant prove,
As when they great misfortunes see
With courage borne, and decency.
So were they borne when Worcester's dismal day
Did all the terrors of black Fate display!
So were they borne when no disguises' cloud
His inward royalty could shrowd;
And one of th' angels whom just God did send
To guard him in his noble flight
(A troop of angels did him then attend!)
Assur'd me in a vision th' other night,
That he (and who could better judge than he?)
Did then more greatness in him see,
More lustre and more majesty,
Than all his coronation-pomp can shew to human eye.

Him and his royal brothers when I saw
New marks of honour and of glory
From their affronts and sufferings draw,
And look like heavenly saints e'en in their purgatory;

Methoughts I saw the three Judean Youths
(Three unhurt martyrs for the noblest truths!)
In the Chaldean furnace walk;
How cheerfully and unconcern'd they talk!
No hair is singe'd, no smallest beauty blasted!
Like painted lamps they shine unwasted!
The greedy fire itself dares not be fed
With the blest oil of an anointed head.
The honourable flame
(Which rather light we ought to name)
Does like a glory compass them around,
And their whole body 's crown'd.
What are those two bright creatures which we see
Walk with the royal Three
In the same ordeal fire,
And mutual joys inspire?
Sure they the beauteous sisters are,
Who, whilst they seek to bear their share,
Will suffer no affliction to be there!
Less favour to those Three of old was shown,
To solace with their company
The fiery trials of adversity!
Two Angels join with these, the others had but one.

Come forth, come forth, ye men of God belov'd!
And let the power now of that flame,
Which against you so impotent became,
On all your enemies be prov'd.
Come, mighty Charles! desire of nations! come;
Come, you triumphant exile! home.

He 's come, he 's safe at shore; I hear the noise
Of a whole land which does at once rejoice,
I hear th' united people's sacred voice.
The sea, which circles us around,
Ne'er sent to land so loud a sound;
The mighty shout sends to the sea a gale,
And swells up every sail:
The bells and guns are scarcely heard at all;
The artificial joy 's drown'd by the natural.
All England but one bonfire seems to be,
One Ætna shooting flames into the sea:
The starry worlds, which shine to us afar,
Take ours at this time for a star.
With wine all rooms, with wine the conduits, flow;
And we, the priests of a poetic rage,
Wonder that in this golden age
The rivers too should not do so.
There is no Stoick, sure, who would not now
Ev'n some excess allow;
And grant that one wild fit of cheerful folly
Should end our twenty years of dismal melancholy.

Where 's now the royal mother, where,
To take her mighty share
In this so ravishing sight,
And, with the part she takes, to add to the delight?
Ah! why art thou not here,
Thou always best, and now the happiest Queen!
To see our joy, and with new joy be seen?

God has a bright example made of thee,
To shew that woman-kind may be
Above that sex which her superior seems,
In wisely managing the wide extremes
Of great affliction, great felicity.
How well those different virtues thee become,
Daughter of triumphs, wife of martyrdom!
Thy princely mind with so much courage bore
Affliction, that it dares return no more;
With so much goodness us'd felicity,
That it cannot refrain from coming back to thee;
'T is come, and seen to-day in all its bravery!

Who 's that heroic person leads it on,
And gives it like a glorious bride
(Richly adorn'd with nuptial pride)
Into the hands now of thy son?
'T is the good General, the man of praise,
Whom God at last, in gracious pity,
Did to th' enthralled nation raise,
Their great Zerubbabel to be;
To loose the bonds of long captivity,
And to rebuild their temple and their city!
For ever blest may he and his remain,
Who, with a vast, though less-appearing, gain,
Preferr'd the solid Great above the Vain,
And to the world this princely truth has shown—
That more 't is to restore, than to usurp a crown!
Thou worthiest person of the British story!
(Though 't is not small the British glory)

Did I not know my humble verse must be
But ill-proportion'd to the height of thee,
Thou and the world should see
How much my Muse, the foe of flattery,
Does make true praise her labour and design;
An Iliad or an Æneid should be thine.

And ill should we deserve this happy day,
If no acknowledgments we pay
To you, great patriots of the two
Most truly Other Houses now;
Who have redeem'd from hatred and from shame
A Parliament's once venerable name;
And now the title of a House restore,
To that which was but Slaughter-house before.
If my advice, ye worthies! might be ta'en,
Within those reverend places,
Which now your living presence graces,
Your marble-statues always should remain,
To keep alive your useful memory,
And to your successors th' example be
Of truth, religion, reason, loyalty:
For, though a firmly-settled peace
May shortly make your publick labours cease,
The grateful nation will with joy consent
That in this sense you should be said
(Though yet the name sounds with some dread)
To be the Long, the Endless, Parliament.

ON THE

QUEEN'S REPAIRING SOMERSET-HOUSE.

WHEN God (the cause to me and men unknown)
Forsook the royal houses, and his own,
And both abandon'd to the common foe;
How near to ruin did my glories go!
Nothing remain'd t' adorn this princely place
Which covetous hands could take, or rude deface.
In all my rooms and galleries I found
The richest figures torn, and all around
Dismember'd statues of great heroes lay;
Such Naseby's field seem'd on the fatal day!
And me, when nought for robbery was left,
They starv'd to death: the gasping walls were cleft,
The pillars sunk, the roofs above me wept,
No sign of spring, or joy, my garden kept;
Nothing was seen which could content the eye,
Till dead the impious tyrant here did lie.
See how my face is chang'd! and what I am
Since my true mistress, and now foundress, came!
It does not fill her bounty to restore
Me as I was (nor was I small before):
She imitates the kindness to her shown;
She does, like Heaven (which the dejected throne
At once restores, fixes, and higher rears),
Strengthen, enlarge, exalt, what she repairs.

And now I dare (though proud I must not be,
Whilst my great mistress I so humble see
In all her various glories) now I dare
Ev'n with the proudest palaces compare.
My beauty and convenience will, I 'm sure,
So just a boast with modesty endure;
And all must to me yield, when I shall tell
How I am plac'd, and who does in me dwell.
Before my gate a street's broad channel goes,
Which still with waves of crowding people flows;
And every day there passes by my side,
Up to its western reach, the London tide,
The spring-tides of the term: my front looks down
On all the pride and business of the town;
My other front (for, as in kings we see
The liveliest image of the Deity,
We in their houses should heaven's likeness find,
Where nothing can be said to be Behind)
My other fair and more majestic face
(Who can the fair to more advantage place?)
For ever gazes on itself below,
In the best mirror that the world can show.
And here behold, in a long bending row,
How two joint-cities make one glorious bow!
The midst, the noblest place, possest by me,
Best to be seen by all, and all o'er-see!
Which way soe'er I turn my joyful eye,
Here the great court, there the rich town, I spy;
On either side dwells safety and delight;
Wealth on the left, and power upon the right.

T' assure yet my defence, on either hand,
Like mighty forts, in equal distance stand
Two of the best and stateliest piles which e'er
Man's liberal piety of old did rear;
Where the two princes of th' Apostles' band,
My neighbours and my guards, watch and command.
My warlike guard of ships, which farther lie,
Might be my object too, were not the eye
Stopt by the houses of that wondrous street
Which rides o'er the broad river like a fleet.
The stream's eternal siege they fixt abide,
And the swoln stream's auxiliary tide,
Though both their ruin with joint power conspire;
Both to out-brave, they nothing dread but fire.
And here my Thames, though it more gentle be
Than any flood so strengthen'd by the sea,
Finding by art his natural forces broke,
And bearing, captive-like, the arched yoke,
Does roar, and foam, and rage, at the disgrace,
But re-composes straight, and calms his face;
Is into reverence and submission strook,
As soon as from afar he does but look
Tow'rds the white palace, where that king does reign
Who lays his laws and bridges o'er the main.
Amidst these louder honours of my seat,
And two vast cities, troublesomely great,
In a large various plain the country too
Opens her gentler blessings to my view:
In me the active and the quiet mind,
By different ways, equal content may find.

If any prouder virtuoso's sense
At that part of my prospect take offence,
By which the meaner cabins are descry'd,
Of my imperial river's humbler side—
If they call that a blemish—let them know,
God, and my godlike mistress, think not so;
For the distress'd and the afflicted lie
Most in their care, and always in their eye.

And thou, fair river! who still pay'st to me
Just homage, in thy passage to the sea,
Take here this one instruction as thou go'st—
When thy mixt waves shall visit every coast;
When round the world their voyage they shall make,
And back to thee some secret channels take;
Ask them what nobler sight they e'er did meet,
Except thy mighty master's sovereign fleet,
Which now triumphant o'er the main does ride,
The terror of all lands, the ocean's pride.

From hence his kingdoms, happy now at last,
(Happy, if wise by their misfortunes past!)
From hence may omens take of that success
Which both their future wars and peace shall bless.
The peaceful mother on mild Thames does build;
With her son's fabricks the rough sea is fill'd.

THE COMPLAINT.

IN a deep vision's intellectual scene,
Beneath a bower for sorrow made,
Th' uncomfortable shade
Of the black yew's unlucky green,
Mixt with the mourning willow's careful grey,
Where reverend Cham cuts out his famous way,
The melancholy Cowley lay:
And lo! a Muse appear'd to 's closed sight,
(The Muses oft in lands of vision play)
Body'd, array'd, and seen, by an internal light.
A golden harp with silver strings she bore;
A wondrous hieroglyphick robe she wore,
In which all colours and all figures were,
That nature or that fancy can create,
That art can never imitate;
And with loose pride it wanton'd in the air.
In such a dress, in such a well-cloth'd dream,
She us'd, of old, near fair Ismenus' stream,
Pindar, her Theban favourite, to meet;
A crown was on her head, and wings were on her feet.

She touch'd him with her harp, and rais'd him from the ground;
The shaken strings melodiously resound.
"Art thou return'd at last," said she,
"To this forsaken place and me?

" Thou prodigal! who didst so loosely waste
" Of all thy youthful years the good estate;
" Art thou return'd here, to repent too late,
" And gather husks of learning up at last,
" Now the rich harvest-time of life is past,
" And winter marches on so fast?
" But, when I meant t' adopt thee for my son,
" And did as learn'd a portion assign,
" As ever any of the mighty Nine
" Had to their dearest children done;
" When I resolv'd t' exalt thy' anointed name,
" Among the spiritual lords of peaceful fame;
" Thou changeling! thou, bewitch'd with noise and
" show
" Wouldst into courts and cities from me go;
" Wouldst see the world abroad, and have a share
" In all the follies and the tumults there:
" Thou wouldst, forsooth, be something in a state,
" And business thou wouldst find, and wouldst create:
" Business! the frivolous pretence
" Of human lusts, to shake off innocence;
" Business! the grave impertinence;
" Business! the thing which I of all things hate;
" Business! the contradiction of thy fate.

" Go, renegado! cast up thy account,
" And see to what amount
" Thy foolish gains by quitting me:
" The sale of Knowledge, Fame, and Liberty,
" The fruits of thy unlearn'd apostacy.

" Thou thought'st, if once the publick storm were past,
" All thy remaining life should sun-shine be:
" Behold! the publick storm is spent at last,
" The sovereign's tost at sea no more,
" And thou, with all the noble company,
" Art got at last to shore.
" But, whilst thy fellow-voyagers I see
" All march'd up to possess the promis'd land,
" Thou still alone, alas! dost gaping stand
" Upon the naked beach, upon the barren sand!

" As a fair morning of the blessed spring,
" After a tedious stormy night,
" Such was the glorious entry of our king;
" Enriching moisture dropp'd on every thing;
" Plenty he sow'd below, and cast about him light!
" But then, alas! to thee alone
" One of old Gideon's miracles was shown;
" For every tree and every herb around
" With pearly dew was crown'd,
" And upon all the quicken'd ground
" The fruitful seed of heaven did brooding lie,
" And nothing but the Muse's fleece was dry.
" It did all other threats surpass,
" When God to his own people said [led)
" (The men whom through long wanderings he had
" That he would give them ev'n a heaven of brass:
" They look'd up to that heaven in vain,
" That bounteous heaven, which God did not re-
" strain
" Upon the most unjust to shine and rain,

" The Rachel, for which twice seven years and
" more
" Thou didst with faith and labour serve,
" And didst (if faith and labour can) deserve,
" Though she contracted was to thee,
" Given to another, who had store
" Of fairer and of richer wives before,
" And not a Leah left, thy recompence to be!
" Go on: twice seven years more thy fortune try;
" Twice seven years more God in his bounty may
" Give thee, to fling away
" Into the court's deceitful lottery:
" But think how likely 't is that thou,
" With the dull work of thy unwieldy plough,
" Shouldst in a hard and barren season thrive,
" Should even able be to live;
" Thou, to whose share so little bread did fall,
" In the miraculous year when manna rain'd on all."

Thus spake the Muse, and spake it with a smile,
That seem'd at once to pity and revile.
And to her thus, raising his thoughtful head,
The melancholy Cowley said—
" Ah, wanton foe! dost thou upbraid
" The ills which thou thyself hast made?
" When in the cradle innocent I lay,
" Thou, wicked spirit! stolest me away,
" And my abused soul didst bear
" Into thy new-found worlds, I know not where,
" Thy golden Indies in the air;

" And ever since I strive in vain
" My ravish'd freedom to regain;
" Still I rebel, still thou dost reign;
" Lo! still in verse against thee I complain.
" There is a sort of stubborn weeds,
" Which, if the earth but once, it ever, breeds;
" No wholesome herb can near them thrive,
" No useful plant can keep alive:
" The foolish sports I did on thee bestow,
" Make all my art and labour fruitless now;
" Where once such fairies dance, no grass doth
" ever grow.

" When my new mind had no infusion known,
" Thou gav'st so deep a tincture of thine own,
" That ever since I vainly try
" To wash away th' inherent dye:
" Long work perhaps may spoil thy colours quite,
" But never will reduce the native white:
" To all the ports of honour and of gain
" I often steer my course in vain;
" Thy gale comes cross, and drives me back again.
" Thou slacken'st all my nerves of industry,
" By making them so oft to be
" The tinkling strings of thy loose minstrelsy.
" Whoever this world's happiness would see,
" Must as entirely cast off thee,
" As they who only heaven desire
" Do from the world retire.
" This was my error, this my gross mistake,
" Myself a demi-votary to make.

" Thus, with Sapphira and her husband's fate
" (A fault which I, like them, am taught too late),
" For all that I gave up I nothing gain,
" And perish for the part which I retain.

" Teach me not then, O thou fallacious Muse!
" The court, and better king, t' accuse:
" The heaven under which I live is fair,
" The fertile soil will a full harvest bear:
" Thine, thine is all the barrenness; if thou
" Mak'st me sit still and sing, when I should plough.
" When I but think how many a tedious year
" Our patient sovereign did attend
" His long misfortunes' fatal end;
" How cheerfully, and how exempt from fear,
" On the Great Sovereign's will he did depend;
" I ought to be accurst, if I refuse
" To wait on his, O thou fallacious Muse!
" Kings have long hands, they say; and, though I be
" So distant, they may reach at length to me.
" However, of all princes, thou
" Shouldst not reproach rewards for being small or
" slow;
" Thou! who rewardest but with popular breath,
" And that too after death."

ON COLONEL TUKE'S TRAGI-COMEDY,

THE ADVENTURES OF FIVE HOURS.

AS when our kings (lords of the spacious main)
Take in just wars a rich plate-fleet of Spain,
The rude unshapen ingots they reduce
Into a form of beauty and of use;
On which the conqueror's image now does shine,
Not his whom it belong'd to in the mine:
So, in the mild contentions of the Muse
(The war which Peace itself loves and pursues)
So have you home to us in triumph brought
This Cargazon of Spain with treasures fraught.
You have not basely gotten it by stealth,
Nor by translation borrow'd all its wealth;
But by a powerful spirit made it your own;
Metal before, money by you 't is grown.
'T is current now, by your adorning it
With the fair stamp of your victorious wit.
But, though we praise this voyage of your mind,
And though ourselves enrich'd by it we find;
We 're not contented yet, because we know
What greater stores at home within it grow.
We 've seen how well you foreign ores refine;
Produce the gold of your own nobler mine:
The world shall then our native plenty view,
And fetch materials for their wit from you;
They all shall watch the travails of your pen,
And Spain on you shall make reprisals then.

ON THE DEATH OF

MRS. KATHARINE PHILIPS.

CRUEL Disease! ah, could not it suffice
Thy old and constant spite to exercise
Against the gentlest and the fairest sex,
Which still thy depredations most do vex?
Where still thy malice most of all
(Thy malice or thy lust) does on the fairest fall?
And in them most assault the fairest place,
The throne of empress Beauty, ev'n the face?
There was enough of that here to assuage
(One would have thought) either thy lust or rage.
Was 't not enough, when thou, profane Disease!
Didst on this glorious temple seize?
Was 't not enough, like a wild zealot, there,
All the rich outward ornaments to tear,
Deface the innocent pride of beauteous images?
Was 't not enough thus rudely to defile,
But thou must quite destroy, the goodly pile?
And thy unbounded sacrilege commit
On th' inward holiest holy of her wit?
Cruel Disease! there thou mistook'st thy power;
No mine of death can that devour;
On her embalmed name it will abide
An everlasting pyramid,
As high as heaven the top, as earth the basis wide.

All ages past record, all countries now
In various kinds such equal beauties show,

That ev'n judge Paris would not know
On whom the golden apple to bestow;
Though Goddesses t' his sentence did submit,
Women and lovers would appeal from it:
Nor durst he say, of all the female race,
This is the sovereign face.
And some (though these be of a kind that 's rare,
That 's much, ah, much less frequent than the fair)
So equally renown'd for virtue are,
That it the mother of the Gods might pose,
When the best woman for her guide she chose.
But if Apollo should design
A woman Laureat to make,
Without dispute he would Orinda take,
Though Sappho and the famous Nine
Stood by, and did repine.
To be a princess, or a queen,
Is great; but 'tis a greatness always seen:
The world did never but two women know,
Who, one by fraud, th' other by wit, did rise
To the two tops of spiritual dignities;
One female pope of old, one female poet now.

Of female poets, who had names of old,
Nothing is shown, but only told,
And all we hear of them perhaps may be
Male-flattery only, and male-poetry.
Few minutes did their beauty's lightning waste,
The thunder of their voice did longer last,
But that too soon was past.

The certain proofs of our Orinda's wit
In her own lasting characters are writ,
And they will long my praise of them survive,
Though long perhaps, too, that may live.
The trade of glory, manag'd by the pen,
Though great it be, and every-where is found,
Does bring in but small profit to us men;
'T is, by the number of the sharers, drown'd.
Orinda, on the female coasts of Fame,
Ingrosses all the goods of a poetick name;
She does no partner with her see;
Does all the business there alone, which we
Are forc'd to carry on by a whole company.

But wit 's like a luxuriant vine;
Unless to virtue's prop it join,
Firm and erect towards heaven bound;
Though it with beauteous leaves and pleasant fruit be crown'd,
It lies, deform'd and rotting, on the ground.
Now shame and blushes on us all,
Who our own sex superior call!
Orinda does our boasting sex out-do,
Not in wit only, but in virtue too:
She does above our best examples rise,
In hate of vice and scorn of vanities.
Never did spirit of the manly make,
And dipp'd all o'er in Learning's sacred lake,
A temper more invulnerable take.
No violent passion could an entrance find
Into the tender goodness of her mind:

Through walls of stone those furious bullets may
Force their impetuous way;
When her soft breast they hit, powerless and dead
they lay!

The fame of Friendship, which so long had told
Of three or four illustrious names of old,
Till hoarse and weary with the tale she grew,
Rejoices now t' have got a new,
A new and more surprising story,
Of fair Lucasia's and Orinda's glory.
As when a prudent man does once perceive
That in some foreign country he must live,
The language and the manners he does strive
To understand and practise here,
That he may come no stranger there:
So well Orinda did herself prepare,
In this much different clime, for her remove
To the glad world of Poetry and Love.

HYMN TO LIGHT.

FIRST-born of Chaos, who so fair didst come
From the old negro's darksome womb!
Which, when it saw the lovely child,
The melancholy mass put on kind looks and smil'd;

Thou tide of glory, which no rest dost know,
But ever ebb and ever flow!

Thou golden shower of a true Jove! [love!
Who does in thee descend, and heaven to earth make

Hail, active Nature's watchful life and health!
Her joy, her ornament, and wealth!
Hail to thy husband Heat, and thee! [he!
Thou the world's beauteous bride, the lusty bridegroom

Say from what golden quivers of the sky
Do all thy winged arrows fly?
Swiftness and power by birth are thine:
From thy great sire they came, thy sire the Word Divine.

'T is, I believe, this archery to show,
That so much cost in colours thou,
And skill in painting, dost bestow,
Upon thy ancient arms, the gaudy heavenly bow.

Swift as light thoughts their empty career run,
Thy race is finish'd when begun;
Let a post-angel start with thee,
And thou the goal of earth shalt reach as soon as he.

Thou in the moon's bright chariot, proud and gay,
Dost thy bright wood of stars survey;
And all the year dost with thee bring
Of thousand flowery lights thine own nocturnal spring.

Thou, Scythian-like, dost round thy lands above
The sun's gilt tents for ever move,

And still, as thou in pomp dost go,
The shining pageants of the world attend thy show.

Nor amidst all these triumphs dost thou scorn
The humble glow-worms to adorn,
And with those living spangles gild
(O greatness without pride!) the bushes of the field.

Night, and her ugly subjects, thou dost fright,
And Sleep, the lazy owl of night;
Asham'd, and fearful to appear,
They skreen their horrid shapes with the black hemi-[sphere.

With them there hastes, and wildly takes th' alarm,
Of painted dreams a busy swarm:
At the first opening of thine eye
The various clusters break, the antick atoms fly.

The guilty serpents, and obscener beasts,
Creep, conscious, to their secret rests:
Nature to thee does reverence pay,
Ill omens and ill sights removes out of thy way.

At thy appearance, Grief itself is said
To shake his wings, and rouse his head:
And cloudy Care has often took
A gentle beamy smile, reflected from thy look.

At thy appearance, Fear itself grows bold;
Thy sun-shine melts away his cold.

Encourag'd at the sight of thee,
To the cheek colour comes, and firmness to the knee.

Ev'n Lust, the master of a harden'd face,
Blushes, if thou be'st in the place,
To Darkness' curtains he retires;
In sympathizing night he rolls his smoky fires.

When, Goddess! thou lift'st up thy waken'd head,
Out of the morning's purple bed,
Thy quire of birds about thee play,
And all the joyful world salutes the rising day.

The ghosts, and monster-spirits, that did presume
A body's privilege to assume,
Vanish again invisibly,
And bodies gain again their visibility.

All the world's bravery, that delights our eyes,
Is but thy several liveries;
Thou the rich dye on them bestow'st,
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou go'st.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st;
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st;
The virgin-lilies, in their white,
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.

The violet, Spring's little infant, stands
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands:

On the fair tulip thou dost doat;
Thou cloth'st it in a gay and parti-colour'd coat.

With flame condens'd thou dost thy jewels fix,
And solid colours in it mix:
Flora herself envies to see
Flowers fairer than her own, and durable as she.

Ah, Goddess! would thou couldst thy hand withhold,
And be less liberal to gold!
Didst thou less value to it give,
Of how much care, alas! might'st thou poor man relieve!

To me the sun is more delightful far,
And all fair days much fairer are.
But few, ah! wondrous few, there be,
Who do not gold prefer, O Goddess! ev'n to thee.

Through the soft ways of heaven, and air, and sea,
Which open all their pores to thee,
Like a clear river thou dost glide,
And with thy living stream through the close channels slide.

But, where firm bodies thy free course oppose,
Gently thy source the land o'erflows;
Takes there possession, and does make,
Of colours mingled light, a thick and standing lake.

But the vast ocean of unbounded day
In th' empyræan heaven does stay.
Thy rivers, lakes, and springs, below,
From thence took first their rise, thither at last must flow.

TO

THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

PHILOSOPHY, the great and only heir
Of all that human knowledge which has been
Unforfeited by man's rebellious sin,
Though full of years he do appear
(Philosophy, I say, and call it He;
For, whatsoe'er the painter's fancy be,
It a male-virtue seems to me),
Has still been kept in nonage till of late,
Nor manag'd or enjoy'd his vast estate.
Three or four thousand years, one would have thought,
To ripeness and perfection might have brought
A science so well bred and nurst,
And of such hopeful parts too at the first:
But, oh! the guardians and the tutors then
(Some negligent and some ambitious men)
Would ne'er consent to set him free,
Or his own natural powers to let him see,
Lest that should put an end to their authority.

That his own business he might quite forget,
They amus'd him with the sports of wanton wit;

With the desserts of poetry they fed him,
Instead of solid meats t' increase his force;
Instead of vigorous exercise, they led him
Into the pleasant labyrinths of ever-fresh discourse;
  Instead of carrying him to see
The riches which do hoarded for him lie
  In Nature's endless treasury,
  They chose his eye to entertain
  (His curious but not covetous eye)
With painted scenes and pageants of the brain.
Some few exalted spirits this latter age has shown,
That labour'd to assert the liberty
(From guardians who were now usurpers grown)
Of this old minor still, captiv'd Philosophy;
  But 't was rebellion call'd, to fight
  For such a long-oppressed right.
Bacon at last, a mighty man, arose
  (Whom a wise king, and Nature, chose,
  Lord chancellor of both their laws),
And boldly undertook the injur'd pupil's cause.

Authority—which did a body boast,
Though 't was but air condens'd, and stalk'd about,
Like some old giant's more gigantick ghost,
  To terrify the learned rout
With the plain magick of true Reason's light—
  He chac'd out of our sight;
Nor suffer'd living men to be misled
  By the vain shadows of the dead;
To graves, from whence it rose, the conquer'd phantom fled.

He broke that monstrous God which stood
In midst of th' orchard, and the whole did claim;
Which with a useless scythe of wood,
And something else not worth a name
(Both vast for show, yet neither fit
Or to defend, or to beget;
Ridiculous and senseless terrors!) made
Children and superstitious men afraid.
The orchard's open now, and free,
Bacon has broke the scare-crow deity:
Come, enter, all that will,
Behold the ripen'd fruit, come gather now your fill!
Yet still, methinks, we fain would be
Catching at the forbidden tree—
We would be like the Deity—
When truth and falsehood, good and evil, we,
Without the senses' aid, within ourselves would see;
For 't is God only who can find
All Nature in his mind.

From words, which are but pictures of the thought
(Though we our thoughts from them perversely drew),
To things, the mind's right object, he it brought:
Like foolish birds, to painted grapes we flew;
He sought and gather'd for our use the true;
And, when on heaps the chosen bunches lay,
He press'd them wisely the mechanick way,
Till all their juice did in one vessel join,
Ferment into a nourishment divine,
The thirsty soul's refreshing wine.

Who to the life an exact piece would make,
Must not from others' work a copy take;
No, not from Rubens or Vandyke;
Much less content himself to make it like
Th' ideas and the images which lie
In his own fancy or his memory.
No, he before his sight must place
The natural and living face;
The real object must command
Each judgment of his eye and motion of his hand.

From these and all long errors of the way,
In which our wandering predecessors went,
And, like th' old Hebrews, many years did stray,
In deserts but of small extent,
Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last:
The barren wilderness he past;
Did on the very border stand
Of the blest promis'd land;
And from the mountain's top of his exalted wit,
Saw it himself, and shew'd us it.
But life did never to one man allow
Time to discover worlds and conquer too;
Nor can so short a line sufficient be
To fathom the vast depths of Nature's sea.
The work he did we ought t' admire;
And were unjust if we should more require
From his few years, divided 'twixt th' excess
Of low affliction and high happiness:
For who on things remote can fix his sight,
That 's always in a triumph or a fight?

From you, great champions! we expect to get
These spacious countries, but discover'd yet;
Countries, where yet, instead of Nature, we
Her images and idols worshipp'd see:
These large and wealthy regions to subdue,
Though Learning has whole armies at command,
  Quarter'd about in every land,
A better troop she ne'er together drew:
  Methinks, like Gideon's little band,
  God with design has pick'd out you,
To do those noble wonders by a few:
When the whole host he saw, "They are" (said he)
  "Too many to o'ercome for me;"
  And now he chooses out his men,
  Much in the way that he did then;
  Not those many whom he found
  Idly' extended on the ground,
  To drink with their dejected head
The stream, just so as by their mouths it fled:
  No; but those few who took the waters up,
And made of their laborious hands the cup.

Thus you prepar'd, and in the glorious fight
  Their wondrous pattern too you take;
Their old and empty pitchers first they brake,
And with their hands then lifted up the light.
  Io! sound too the trumpets here!
Already your victorious lights appear;
New scenes of heaven already we espy,
And crowds of golden worlds on high,

Which from the spacious plains of earth and sea
  Could never yet discover'd be,
By sailors' or Chaldeans' watchful eye.
Nature's great works no distance can obscure,
No smallness her near objects can secure;
  Y' have taught the curious sight to press
  Into the privatest recess
Of her imperceptible littleness!
  Y' have learn'd to read her smallest hand,
And well begun her deepest sense to understand!

Mischief and true dishonour fall on those
Who would to laughter or to scorn expose
So virtuous and so noble a design,
So human for its use, for knowledge so divine.
'The things which these proud men despise, and call
  Impertinent, and vain, and small,
Those smallest things of nature let me know,
Rather than all their greatest actions do!
Whoever would deposed Truth advance
  Into the throne usurp'd from it,
Must feel at first the blows of Ignorance,
  And the sharp points of envious Wit.
So, when, by various turns of the celestial dance,
  In many thousand years
  A star, so long unknown, appears,
Though heaven itself more beauteous by it grow,
It troubles and alarms the world below;
Does to the wise a star, to fools a meteor, show.

With courage and success you the bold work begin;
Your cradle has not idle been:
None e'er, but Hercules and you, would be
At five years age worthy a history.
And ne'er did Fortune better yet
Th' historian to the story fit:
As you from all old errors free
And purge the body of Philosophy;
So from all modern follies he
Has vindicated Eloquence and Wit.
His candid style like a clean stream does slide,
And his bright fancy, all the way,
Does like the sun-shine in it play;
It does, like Thames, the best of rivers! glide,
Where the God does not rudely overturn,
But gently pour, the crystal urn,
And with judicious hand does the whole current guide:
'T has all the beauties Nature can impart,
And all the comely dress, without the paint, of Art.

UPON

THE CHAIR

MADE OUT OF

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S SHIP,

Presented to the University Library of Oxford by John Davis, of Deptford, Esquire.

TO this great ship, which round the globe has run,
And match'd in race the chariot of the sun,
This Pythagorean ship (for it may claim
Without presumption so deserv'd a name,
By knowledge once, and transformation now)
In her new shape, this sacred port allow.
Drake and his ship could not have wish'd from Fate
A more blest station, or more blest estate;
For, lo! a seat of endless rest is given
To her in Oxford, and to him in heaven.

PROLOGUE

TO THE

CUTTER OF COLMAN STREET.

AS, when the midland sea is no-where clear
From dreadful fleets of Tunis and Argier—
Which coast about, to all they meet with foes,
And upon which nought can be got but blows—

The merchant-ships so much their passage doubt,
That, though full-freighted, none dares venture out,
And trade decays, and scarcity ensues;
Just so the timorous wits of late refuse,
Though laded, to put forth upon the stage,
Affrighted by the criticks of this age.
It is a party numerous, watchful, bold;
They can from nought, which sails in sight, withhold;
Nor do their cheap, though mortal, thunder spare;
They shoot, alas! with wind-guns charg'd with air.
But yet, gentlemen-criticks of Argier,
For your own interest I'd advise ye here,
To let this little forlorn-hope go by
Safe and untouch'd, "That must not be" (you'll cry).
If ye be wise, it must; I'll tell you why.
There are seven, eight, nine—stay—there are behind
Ten plays at least, which wait but for a wind,
And the glad news that we the enemy miss;
And those are all your own, if you spare this.
Some are but new trimm'd up, others quite new;
Some by known shipwrights built, and others too
By that great author made, whoe'er he be,
That styles himself "Person of Quality:"
All these, if we miscarry here to-day,
Will rather till they rot in th' harbour stay;
Nay, they will back again, though they were come
Ev'n to their last safe road, the tyring-room.

Therefore again I say, If you be wise,
Let this for once pass free; let it suffice
That we, your sovereign power here to avow,
Thus humbly, ere we pass, strike sail to you.

ADDED AT COURT.

STAY, gentlemen; what I have said was all
But forc'd submission, which I now recall.
Ye 're all but pirates now again; for here
Does the true sovereign of the seas appear,
The sovereign of these narrow seas of wit;
'T is his own Thames; he knows and governs it.
'T is his dominion and domain; as he
Pleases, 't is either shut to us, or free.
Not only, if his passport we obtain,
We fear no little rovers of the main;
But, if our Neptune his calm visage show,
No wave shall dare to rise or wind to blow.

NOTES.

THE MOTTO.—Page 27.

Dr. Hurd has omitted in his Text the Lines from

I shall, like beasts or common people, die,

to

Hence all the flattering vanities, that lay—

Page 28.

He conquer'd th' earth; the whole world, you. Earth, means this habitable globe; *world,* the system of universal nature. But the compliment is not a little extravagant! like that of Mr. Pope to Newton—

"God said, Let Newton be, and *all* was light"

—for which the Poet is very justly reprehended by his learned Commentator.

——— *only he,*

Who best can praise thee, next must be. i. e. he must be *only* next; for none but Cicero himself was equal to the subject. The poet glances at what Livy said of the great Roman orator—"vir magnus, acer, memorabilis, et *in cujus laudes sequendas Cicerone laudatore opus fuerit.*" A fragment, preserved by the elder Seneca.

Whose verse walks highest, but not flies. i. e. which keeps within the limits of nature, and is sublime without being extravagant. Virgil's *epic* Muse is here justly characterized: the *Lyric,* is a swan of another species, of which the poet says nobly, elsewhere—

"Lo, how th' obsequious wind and swelling air
"The Theban swan does upwards bear
"Into the walks of clouds, where he does play,
"And with extended wings open his liquid way."
Pindaric Odes. *The Praise of Pindar.*

ODE.—OF WIT.—Page 28.

Less women love't, either in love or dress. We should now say, to avoid the disagreeable contraction,—

" Less women love *it*, *or* in love, or dress."

—But our poet *affected* these contractions, and, if we may believe the writer of his life, fancied they gave a strength and energy to his verse. The truer reason for his use of them was, that he found them in fashion.

Page 29.

No towns or houses rais'd by poetry. Here used in the double sense of *houses*, properly so called, and of *families*.

Page 30.

If those be stars which paint the Galaxy. This idea has been borrowed by Mr. Addison, and applied, with much elegance, to our poet himself. For, speaking of Mr. Cowley's wit, he says—

" One glitt'ring thought no sooner strikes our eyes
" With silent wonder, but new wonders rise:
" As in the milky way a shining white
" O'erflows the heav'ns with one continued light;
" That not a single star can shew his rays,
" Whilst jointly all promote the common blaze.

Account of English Poets, to Mr. H. S.

Nor the dry chips of short-lung'd Seneca. Meaning his *short* sentences, as if he had not breath enough to serve him for longer—*anhelanti similis*—Yet, in another sense, he is, perhaps, the most *long-winded* author of antiquity. For, as Mr. Bayle has well observed, " Il n'y a guere d'ecrivain " dont le verbiage soit plus grand que celui de Seneque : " Cicero mettroit dans une periode de six lignes ce que Se- " neque dit dans six periodes qui tiennent huit ou neuf " lignes." *Lettres*, t. ii. p. 150.

Dr. Hurd has omitted the two concluding stanzas of this Ode.

TO THE LORD FALKLAND,

For his safe Return from the Northern Expedition against the Scots, in 1639.—PAGE 31.

Consequently the poet was then in his 21st year. These verses to the Lord Falkland perpetuate the memory of the author's *entire friendship* with that virtuous and accomplished nobleman—*a friendship contracted*, as Dr. Sprat tells us, *by the agreement of their learning and manners*.—It is remarkable, that we find no compliment addressed by Mr. Cowley to the Duke of Buckingham, or the Earl of St. Albans. He supposed, without doubt, that he had done honour enough to those lords (some will think, too much) in permitting them to be his patrons:

"Enough for half the greatest of those days
"To 'scape his censure, not expect his praise."

Pope.

PAGE 32.

All virtues, and some customs of the court. The expression is remarkable, and implies that not *all* the customs of Charles the First's court were such as would be approved by a man of virtue. If any are curious to know what those customs were, they may have their curiosity in part gratified, by turning to two remarkable letters of Lady Leicester and Lord Robert Spencer, in the collection of the Sidney papers, vol. ii. p. 472, and p. 668.

To question a monopoly of wit? As it had done many *other* monopolies. The allusion is not so far-fetched as it seems.

As far from danger, as from fear he's free. Yet it was, in part, to vindicate himself from the *imputation* of this fear, that he always put himself in the way *of danger*, and in the end, threw away his valuable life at the battle of Newbury.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. JORDAN,

SECOND MASTER OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.—PAGE 34.

Dr. Hurd has selected the following lines only from this poem, being one of those which were written, as the Author says, when he was very young.

HERE lies the master of my tender years,
The guardian of my parent's hope and fears,
Whose government ne'er stood me in a tear;
All weeping was reserv'd to spend it here.
He pluck'd from youth the follies and the crimes,
And built up men against the future times;
For deeds of age are in their causes then,
And though he taught but boys, he made the men.
Hence 'twas, a master, in those ancient days
When men sought knowledge first, and by it praise,
Was a thing full of reverence, profit, fame;
Father itself was but a second name.
But, if a Muse hereafter smile on me,
And say, "Be thou a poet," men shall see
That none could a more grateful scholar have;
For what I ow'd his life, I'll pay his grave.

The guardian of my parent's hope and fears. That is of his mother's, under whose discipline he was bred; for he was *born* (Dr. Sprat tells us) *after his father's death.*

ON THE DEATH OF SIR ANTHONY VANDYKE.

PAGE 39.

Tho' poets in that word with painters share. Namely, *dare;* alluding to Horace,

"——— pictoribus atque poetis
"*Quidlibet audendi* semper fuit æqua potestas."
Ars. Poet. ver. 11.

Nor was his hand less erring than his heart. A noble eulogy of this extraordinary man! and, if report says true, a very just one.

PAGE 40.

Wond'rously painted in the mind divine. A platonic idea, which Malbranche and our Norris have rendered so famous.

Only his beauteous lady still he loves. A lady, of distinguished *quality*, as well as beauty, daughter to the Lord Ruthen, Earl of Gowry.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. WILLIAM HERVEY,

PAGE 50,

The author's beloved friend.—This poem came from the heart, and is therefore more natural and pleasing than most others of our author. Unluckily, it occasioned the poet's introduction to Lord St. Alban's, that is, it ruined his fortune.

My dearest friend would I had dy'd for thee. From 2 Sam. xviii.

PAGE 51.

A strong and mighty influence join'd our birth. In this and the following stanza the poet has copied Persius, Sat. v.; but with freedom and spirit.

PAGE 52.

He lov'd my worthless rhymes, and, like a friend.

" ——— each finding, like a friend,
" Something to blame, and something to commend."
Pope, to Mr. *Jervas*.

Large was his soul; as large a soul as e'er. Mr. Gray seems to have had his eye on this line when he wrote that verse, in his *Epitaph*—

" *Large* was his bounty, and his *soul* sincere."

PAGE 53.

We 'ave lost in him arts that not yet are found.

" And worlds applaud, that must not yet be found."
Pope, Essay on Crit. ver. 194.

PAGE 55.

Where grief and misery can be join'd with verse. Rightly

made the distinction of *earthly poesy*; for the *heavenly* (if we suppose poetry to have any place there) can only be employed on themes of *joy and happiness*.—But the poet had a further meaning in this fine line, to insinuate the preposterous levity and vanity of *earthly poets*, who can afford to be *witty* even on their own *miseries*. This censure, falling first upon himself, has the more grace.

IMITATION OF MARTIAL.—PAGE 57.

If we for happiness could leisure find. An exquisite line! of which Mr. Gray felt, and has expressed, all the pathos, when, in his Hymn to Adversity, he said—

"Scar'd at thy frown terrific, fly
"Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
"Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
"*And leave us leisure to be good.*" ANON.

THE CHRONICLE.—PAGE 58.

This agreeable Ballad has had justice done to it. Nothing is more famous, even in our days, than Cowley's *mistresses*.

PAGE 61.

All change of weathers that befell. His brilliant wit, for once, is well placed.

TO SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT,

Upon his Two first Books of Gondibert, finished before his Voyage to America.—PAGE 62.

So will our God rebuild man's perish'd frame;
And raise him up much better, yet the same.

It is pleasant to see how the wits catch their ideas from each other. Mr. Pope, in a letter of compliment to a friend, who had done much honour to his *Essay on Man*, expresses himself in these words—"It is indeed the same system as "mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own; *as they say*

" our natural body is the same still, when it is glorified." Works, Letter xcvii.

PAGE 63.

Some men their fancies, like their faith, derive.

" Thus wit, like faith, by each man is apply'd
" To one small sect; and all are damn'd beside."
Essay on Crit. ver. 396.

Did thy desire to seek new worlds infuse. This alludes to Sir William's project of a settlement at Virginia; which, however, had no better success than the poetical project, which his friend here celebrates.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. CRASHAW.—PAGE 69.

And though Pan's death long since all oracles broke. Alluding to the famous story in Plutarch's Dialogue *concerning the silence of the pagan oracles*, and the use made of that story by Eusebius and others; whence it became the general opinion of the learned, in our author's days, that, by the death of the GREAT PAN, was meant the crucifixion of our Saviour.

PAGE 71.

His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong; his life, I'm sure, was in the right.

Hence the famous line of Mr. Pope, which have given such scandal to some, and triumph to others, only because both parties have been more in haste to apply than understand them—

" For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
" His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

Hail, bard triumphant! and some care bestow. Hence the apostrophe of Mr. Pope, but not so happily applied, as here—

" Hail, bards triumphant, born in happier days!"
Essay on Crit. ver. 189.

Expos'd by tyrant-love to savage beasts and fires. As the primitive Christians were, by the *tyrant-hate* of their pagan persecutors. ANON.

ANACREONTIQUES;

Or, some Copies of Verses translated paraphrastically out of an Anacreon.—PAGE 72.

These *Anacreontics* shew, that the author wanted neither ease of expression, nor the grace of numbers, when he followed the bent of his own taste and genius.

PAGE 77.

So few, is an escaping there. A stroke of moral satire, slid in, on that city, so infamous for its brothelry. The poet is sage, even in these mad Anacreontics.

Five hundred both effectively. The term in use with military men (and therefore humorously affected here) for *completely*.

PAGE 84.

Th' antiperistasis of age. This hard word only means *compression*. The word is used by naturalists to express the power, which one quality has, *by pressing on all sides*, to augment it contrary: as here the *cold*, with which old age is environed, increases heat. He expresses this quaint idea more plainly in two verses of THE MISTRESS, where he says—

"Flames their most vigorous heat do hold,
"And purest light, if *compass'd round with cold.*"
The Request, St. 3.

PAGE 86.

In all our heaven I think there be
No such ill-natur'd god as he.

"I think, Crab, my dog, *be* the sourest-natured dog that lives." [*Shaksp. Two Gent. of Verona, A.* 11. *S.* 3.] *Be*, for *am* or *is*, was originally the mistake of one *mode* for another. It, afterwards, grew into credit; and seemed to take an air

of consistency and regularity, when somebody had bethought himself to use, *be'st*, in the Second Person, for *art*. Hence, what grammarians call, the *double form* in the Indicative Present of the Auxiliary, *to be*. It is, now, deservedly exploded.

ODE FROM CATULLUS.—Page 115.

With such a husband, such a wife,
With Acme's and Septimius' life.

It is to be observed, to the honour of our author's morals, and good taste, that, by this little deviation from his original, he has converted a loose love-poem into a sober epithalamium. We have all the grace, and, what is more, all the warmth of Catullus, without his indecency.

THE COMPLAINT.—Page 136.

The plan of this poem is highly poetical: and, though the numbers be not the most pleasing, the expression is almost every where natural and beautiful. But its principal charm is that air of melancholy, thrown over the whole, so expressive of the poet's character.

The *address* of the writer is seen in conveying his just reproaches on the *court*, under a pretended vindication of it against the *Muse*.

Page 137.

Among the spiritual lords of peaceful fame. Alluding to the style of the House of Lords—*the Lords Spiritual and Temporal*.—But see the note on *spiritual dignities*, on the Poem on the Death of Mrs. Philips.

Page 139.

The Rachel, for which twice seven years and more. The masterships of the Savoy.

Page 140.

Where once such Fairies dance, no grass doth ever grow. i. e. no grass which turns to profit.—The poet alludes, in this verse, to the *sour ringlets*, which are sometimes found in

pasture-grounds, and, according to the philosophy of the country-people, are occasioned by fairies dancing upon them. He had probably his eye on that fine passage of Shakspeare,

——— " ye demy-puppets, that
" By moon-shine do the green sour ringlets make,
" Whereof the ewe not bites"——

Tempest, Act 5. S. ii.

PAGE 141.

Teach me not, then, o thou fallacious Muse,
The court, and better king, t' accuse.

i. e. *better* in his own nature, than *the court* [his ministers] would allow him to be. The supposition was decent, but not true. The minister of that time was just, nay generous, to our poet. [See *Lord Clarendon's Life*, Part i. 16.] But, unluckily, the poet's patrons were the minister's most determined enemies. In the mean time, *the better king* cared neither for the minister, nor the poet.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. KATHARINE PHILIPS.

PAGE 143.

This poem is preserved, in honour of the lady, here celebrated, who had the fortune to be equally esteemed by the best poet and best divine of her age.

On th' inward holiest holy of her wit?—I wish the poet had forborn this allusion.

PAGE 144.

That ev'n judge Paris would not know. Familiar, again, or rather burlesque; quite out of season.

When the best woman for her guide she chose. Alluding to the introduction of the statue of *Cybele* into Rome: *Liv.* l. xxix. The goddess, indeed, had a long train of Roman matrons for her attendants. But, as the historian tells the story, she chose the *best man* in Rome for her *host*; not the *best woman*, for her *guide*. Whether the poet forgot himself, or purposely falsified the story for the sake of his application, I know not.

To the two tops of spiritual dignities. The English word, *spiritual*, as applied to dignities, means *religious* or *ecclesiastical*, in opposition to *civil* or *temporal*. But the French word, *spirituel*, of like sound, means, also, *witty* or *intellectual*. Hence the *equivoque;* with which our poet was not a little pleased, as we may see by his repetition of it, in the *Complaint*, St. li.—

"Among the *spiritual* lords of peaceful fame."

—He forgot, on this and other occasions, his own definition of true wit by negatives—

"'Tis not, when *two like words* make up *one noise*."

St. ii. 6.

PAGE 146.

The fame of friendship, which so long had told. Mrs. Philips was as much famed for her *friendships*, as for her poetry. Dr. *J. Taylor* addressed his discourse on *the nature and offices of friendship*, to this lady.

HYMN TO LIGHT.—PAGE 146.

The moral strokes in this hymn amply atone for the false wit and quaint imagery, in which it too much abounds.—It was the malady of that age, to be only taken,

"With glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line."

Pope.

And the abundance of Mr. Cowley's wit made it but too easy for him to regale the vitiated taste of his readers with this sort of entertainment.

PAGE 147.

Let a post-angel start with thee. One of the most glaring faults in the poetry of Mr. Cowley's age was the debasing of great sentiments and images by low allusion, and vulgar expressions. What the reader looked for, was *wit;* and he looked no farther: as if that rule of common sense had been a discovery of yesterday—

"*Expression* is the dress of thought, and still
"Appears more decent, as more *suitable*."

Pope, Essay on Crit. ver. 318.